adf

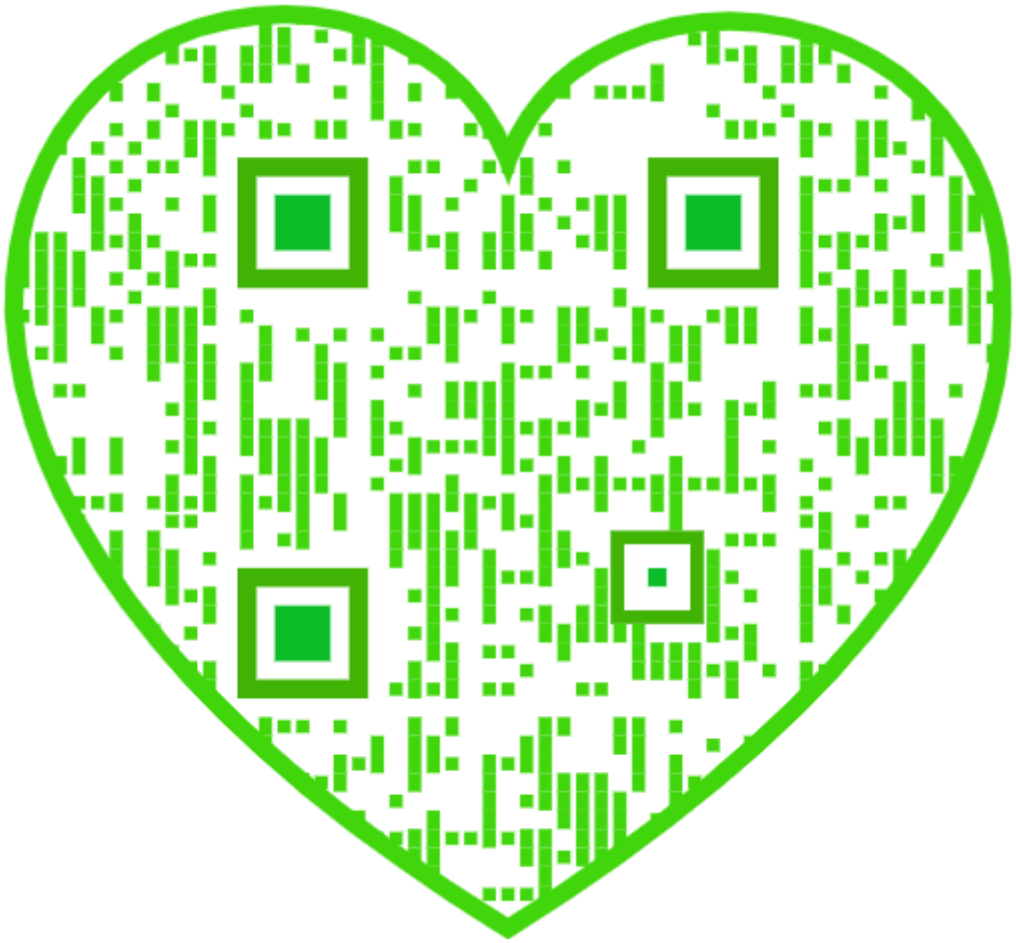
04.25

architectsdatafile.co.uk

PIXEL, ABU DHABI

MVRDV mines a Minecraft look to make a break from the norm in new resi/office/retail scheme

Update your registration here:



Others make products, **we make it personal.**

Manufacturing our globally trusted daylight and ventilation solutions for industrial, commercial and public buildings is only part of our strength. The other is our people.

Whose unwavering dedication, personal service and support to our customers guarantees that every product specified, manufactured and installed will deliver lasting benefits and high performance for years to come.

veluxcommercial.co.uk | sales@veluxcommercial.co.uk | +44 1670 354157

CONTENTS

04.25

NEWS, VIEWS & INSIGHTS

04 Industry News
10 **Site Lines:** SPPARC's Trevor Morris on creatively reusing Olympia's Streamlined car park
14 **Practice Profile:** ECD Architects
18 International Focus
20 CPD Focus
37 UK Construction Week Show Preview
38 Appointments & Company News

PRODUCTS

39 Groundworks & Drainage
40 Modern Methods of Construction
43 Structural Elements
44 External Envelope
52 Insulation
52 Heating, Ventilation & Services
52 Interiors
64 Safety & Security
65 Landscaping & External Works

ROUND TABLE REVIEW

24 **THE CHANGING FACE OF PRODUCT CERTIFICATION & REGULATION**
An expert round table staged by netMAGmedia delved into the key issues around the industry's challenging new product certification goals, post-Building Safety Act

PROJECT REPORT

30 **PIXELATED VISION**
ADF reports on architect MVRDV's new collection of mixed use buildings in Abu Dhabi, which makes a break from the city's architectural norm by breaking down the building's facades into 'pixelated' forms.

FEATURES

41 **MODERN METHODS OF CONSTRUCTION**
MODULAR'S DIVERSE BENEFITS
Wernick's Kasia Nowak on the flexibility and efficiency case for modular.

45 **EXTERNAL ENVELOPE: ROOFING**
HARNESS THE POWER OF EPDS FOR SUSTAINABLE SPECS
Dan Redfern of Marley says EPDs are now an essential resource for architects.

57 **INTERIORS: KITCHENS**
KITCHEN COLOUR PHILOSOPHY
Tim Spann of Keller Kitchens explains how to harness colours in the kitchen.

61 **INTERIORS: BATHROOMS**
THE DESIGN EVOLUTION OF SHOWER TOILETS
Shower toilet technology is being used in new areas, says Sophie Weston of Geberit.

65 **LANDSCAPING & EXTERNAL WORKS**
UNLOCKING SUDS BENEFITS
Richard Eddy of Polypipe Building Products on SuDS' vital role for housebuilding targets.

adf architectsdatafile.co.uk incorporating **Building Projects** magazine, **architectsdatafile.co.uk** and **@architectsDF**

Managing Editor
James Parker

Publisher
Anthony Parker

Account Director
Midge Myatt

Senior Account Manager
Steve Smith

Digital Marketing & PR Account Manager
Suzanne Easter

Operations Director
Shelley Collyer

Events Coordinator
Amy Madigan

Studio Manager
Mikey Pooley

Production Assistant
Georgia Musson

Digital Production Coordinator
Kimberley Musson

Feature Coordinator & Publisher's Assistant
Kim Neville

Finance Director
Simon Reed

Advertising & Administration
01435 863500
info@netmagmedia.co.uk

Press Releases
editorial@netmagmedia.co.uk

Registration & Circulation Enquiries
info@netmagmedia.co.uk

netMAG media
An Employee Owned Company
Cointronic House
Station Road, Heathfield
East Sussex, TN21 8DF

abc

Annual subscription costs just £48 for 12 issues, including post and packing. Phone 01435 863500 for details. Individual copies of the publication are available at £5 each inc p & p. All rights reserved

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, including photocopying, recording or stored in any information retrieval system without the express prior written consent of the publisher. Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy and reliability of material published in Architects Datafile, the publisher can accept no responsibility for the claims or opinions made by contributors, manufacturers or advertisers. Editorial contributors to this journal may have made a payment towards the reproduction costs of material used to illustrate their products. The manufacturer of the paper used within our publication is a Chain-of-Custody certified supplier operating within environmental systems certified to both ISO 14001 and EMAS in order to ensure sustainable production. Printed in England

This magazine may be recycled

FROM THE EDITOR

Our ongoing programme of in-depth industry round tables continues to throw up some fascinating discussions between a diverse range of voices from across the industry. We'd like to think that we are providing a unique mix, featuring product manufacturers (including event sponsors) as well as key specifiers like architects and housebuilders large and small, as well as specialist consultants keen to offer their expertise.

We called these events Building Insights LIVE to both extend our popular ongoing podcast Building Insights brand, and also to emphasise the fact that, unlike so many 'events' these days, this is a face to face, sociable as well as intensive experience. It has been my privilege to chair a variety of challenging as well as lively debates so far, and we have several more in the pipeline. The next event is a big one, looking at the delivery in practice of homes against the Future Homes Standard, and how to unlock innovations. I can't wait to get stuck in, although with a large panel due to the interest in the subject, it will be a challenge just to ensure everyone has their say!

We recently covered a critical subject for our stakeholders (including sponsors Soprema and Siderise) of how the emerging product certification regime post-Building Safety Act will change things for the better. But this round table also did not shy away from the likely pushback from suppliers in terms of whether they will be not only able to test their products, but also on whether they will accept the new, much more robust regime for transparent, fully vetted certification. There were mixed views on the likelihood of this from the supply chain, or clients.

The problem is, we are not accustomed to top-down control of our construction industry, and there's already a raft of risk-related hoops to jump through in most projects. The industry has profited from its convoluted and often somewhat Wild-West approach to testing, accreditation and specification, and to change that fundamentally requires a change of culture such as we have not seen. Paul Morrell, who co-wrote the Government's report Testing For a Safer Future, went further at our round table, saying that such a full-blown culture change was impossible.

Clearly, we must never allow the chaotic state of affairs which led to Grenfell to be possible in future. But how can such a complex and fragmented industry can be pulled into line as one, without some major prosecutions to focus the minds of the 'laggards' (as some at our round table panellists called them)? Grey areas in contracts around products, and simple lack of knowledge, are major blockers to remove for starters.

Due to the two-tier system of the Construction Products Regulation (with most sitting outside), Morrell's report found that two-thirds of products are effectively unregulated. Like the Office of Products Safety department the Government has set up to try and crack this issue, and clamp down on those without credible processes, our round table was only scratching the surface.

However, as you can find out in our round table report in this issue, some attendees (e.g. Peter Caplehorn of the Construction Products Association), believed that major progress is being made, and that we are entering a new era. Slowly, the industry is catching on to what may be a 'new normal' where no stone is unturned on product performance. How they go about testing systems, not just products, however, is another question entirely.

James Parker, Editor

Looking to update or cancel your ADF registration? Scan the QR code to visit our registration page. From here you can also register for our Digital Issues and Newsletters.
Alternatively, please visit architectsdatafile.co.uk/subscribe

ON THE COVER...
Architect MVRDV's new collection of mixed use buildings in Abu Dhabi makes a break from the city's architectural norm by breaking down facades into 'pixelated' forms.
Cover image © Jon Wallis
For the full report on this project, go to page 30

MANUFACTURING

Etex launches expanded plasterboard facility in 'challenging' context

Opening its new £170m expanded and sustainable Siniat plasterboard manufacturing facility in Bristol, global construction products firm Etex says that the construction industry presents a "challenging context" in 2025 but that signs of growth were emerging following its major investment.

Speaking at the facility's official opening in March, CEO of Etex, Bernard Delvaux outline how the company's biggest investment yet came in a "challenging context" in the construction industry, with demand having dropped by 30%-40% in some markets in 2024. However, he added that Etex had "proved resilient, and performed in line with our plans and previsions for the year." This was the result of "a very proactive and detailed approach across several areas, particularly cost management to compensate inflation, energy cost reductions and an efficient purchasing strategy."

The expanded manufacturing facility is zero waste to landfill and includes rainwater harvesting, and is thought to be Etex's most efficient plasterboard production line in Europe in terms of "size, speed and complexity." The capacity provided allows Siniat to produce over 98% of its portfolio of boards in the UK, meaning "significant carbon savings" on transport, while giving the company "greater flexibility" of supply.

John Sinfield, UK country manager for Etex, said that the new plant will mean that as the UK market improves, Siniat will be able to serve growing demand going forward, in its second largest global market: "This investment will give our UK customers additional confidence that we are ready for market recovery and able respond to any increases in demand, in line with wider Governmental drives."

Delvaux said that he believed the UK market had hit the "bottom" of its decline in construction volume in 2024, and was "now seeing slow growth." He added that the firm's Reimagin offsite panel division was seeing greater promotion as part of the company's building products division, enabling Etex "combine products into solutions more and more." He said they "wanted to do more modular, as it is the right way to integrate; customers ask us to provide 'all the products,' so we are giving them a 'project,' and doing more co-engineering with customers."

However, John Sinfield added that he "still wasn't convinced that volume housebuilding was the market for offsite construction," due to there typically being "too much variation" currently in housebuilding.

The company is increasing its recycled gypsum content in Siniat boards, including 30% recycled boards at the Bristol plant; John Sinfield confirmed that "we will continue to work with our partners to push recycled content, but for us it's business as usual." The Ferrybridge plant is now producing boards which are 45% recycled.

MASTERPLAN

Plans for Purley masterplan approved

The Croydon Planning Committee have approved plans submitted by developer Polaska, designed by Assael Architecture and landscape architects, Assael Exteriors, and LA Architects for a new leisure centre on the Purley Pool site, incorporating an integrated retirement community, alongside broader plans to regenerate Purley High Street.

Polaska, which holds the long-term lease on the site, presented the application to Croydon Council. The proposal includes a new leisure centre, a later-living housing scheme (comprising 220 homes for independent, assisted and care homes), and a new public square to serve as a focal point for the town centre's regeneration.

The leisure centre will feature a 25-metre, six-lane main pool, a training pool, an 80-station fitness suite, and studio space. It will also include a new cafe overlooking the training pool, soft play area and the new public square.

Assael's designs for Polaska encompass wider area regeneration, featuring a new public square and enhanced public spaces. The plans also propose an improved pedestrian route connecting Whytecliffe Road South and the High Street to enhance pedestrian connectivity with Purley Station.

The planning application was submitted in 2024, and as well as the leisure centre and integrated retirement community, it includes 10% affordable housing and a public realm strategy "reflecting the unique character of Purley town centre."

Guided by townscape and environmental analysis, the building heights harmonise with the site's natural topography, with lower structures fronting the High Street and the new public square.

A prominent marker building enhances wayfinding from Purley Station, marking the new public route leading towards the square, leisure centre, and Purley High Street. The building will feature a meticulously crafted facade, blending intricate brickwork with pre-cast banded elements.

Assael Architecture commented: "Purley High Street showcases an array of detailed brickwork, utilising varying shades of red to create depth and richness. The designs draw inspiration from herringbone patterns and chamfered detailing, celebrating the area's architectural heritage."

The proposal was approved by Croydon's Planning Committee in an 8-2 majority vote in February, and will now go to the Greater London Authority for consideration, as a "referable application," before a formal decision on the application is issued.

B CORP

Notts practice Studio G achieves B Corp certification

Newark-based architecture firm Studio G, part of Gusto Group, has achieved B Corp certification. The business is one of the first architecture firms in Nottinghamshire to achieve the certification, and only the 65th across the whole of the UK.

Studio G is a "highly experienced, client-centred architecture practice, where good quality design is a minimum expectationm," according to the practice. Putting sustainability "at the heart of every project," Studio G said that B Corp certification "further demonstrates the practice's ongoing commitment to environmental, social and governance (ESG) initiatives."

Edward Acres, principal architect at Studio G says: "Becoming a certified B Corp has been an important yet natural progression for Studio G. Alongside implementing sustainable practices in our design processes, our team dedicates time to projects that benefit a variety of social groups.

"We are incredibly proud of the work we have done so far and are in the perfect position to contribute to the growth and delivery of sustainable housing. I cannot wait to be part of this next phase of growth for Studio G."

Studio G has been connected to Gusto Group for the last 15 years. The parent company is a "purpose-driven group of B Corp accredited companies" in the manufacturing, construction and architecture sectors, and includes Gusto Construction, Rototek and Studio G.

The partnership "grew organically, with Gusto Group investing in the firm and using it as its in-house design and architecture practice. Now, Studio G is rejoining the group as an integral part of its structure and one of the three key companies within the Employee Ownership Trust."

Using grey solutions to support blue-green infrastructure

Helping to make urban climate resilience a reality

By supporting 'green by default' best practice and complementing it with engineered grey infrastructure, we are helping to pioneer effective hybrid water management solutions that can:

- reduce the urban heat island effect
- boost biodiversity
- increase water circularity
- create amenity value

We work closely with our partners to create smart solutions including tree tanks, blue-green roofs, irrigation, rainwater attenuation and infiltration tanks.

See how we could help develop your hybrid water management solutions for a more climate-resilient future.

Scan to learn more

wavin

An Orbia business.

NEW APPOINTMENTS

Stride Treglown hires en route to EOT

"Architecture and design practice" Stride Treglown has announced two promotions to its board of directors. The practice is transitioning to an Employee Ownership Trust (EOT), a "significant evolution of its structure," which it says is "in line with its commitment to B Corp certification."

Laura Cassullo and Danny Harris joined the board in March; Cassullo having joined Stride Treglown in 2023. She oversaw the practice's period of growth in London, leading projects including Devonport House – a refurbishment and extension of a Grade II listed building for the University of Greenwich – and several retrofit projects for London Metropolitan University. She is also spearheading the expansion of London's offer, building on the practice's experience across the UK particularly in housing and adaptive reuse and retrofit.

Harris joined Stride Treglown as a graduate in 2014 and will become one of the practice's youngest ever board directors. In four years as sector lead for schools, he has played a pivotal role in forging partnerships with leading contractors across the past three Department for Education frameworks. The practice commented: "His forward-thinking approach has been instrumental in the development of offsite schools and designing one of the first net zero carbon schools in England."

Since his appointment as Bristol studio lead in 2022, Harris has overseen a diverse range of cross-educational projects, including state-of-the-art laboratories. He is currently studying for an executive MBA at the University of Bath, and brings fresh ideas into the senior leadership team, particularly in strategic thinking. In joining the board, Danny will retain directorial responsibility for the Schools and Colleges sector and will oversee innovation, ensuring that new ideas progress from the incubator stage to market-ready service offerings.

Cassullo and Harris' appointments coincide with Stride Treglown's transition to an Employee Ownership Trust model, the next step in the practice's journey that began in 2015, when it was one of the first architectural practices to become employee owned. The move strengthens its governance and gives the 300+ strong team a stronger voice in the running of the practice.

Speaking about the new appointments and structure, Stride Treglown's chair, Pierre Wassenaar said: "We welcome Laura and Danny to the board and are excited by the contributions they will bring. It's vital to add fresh voices and make sure we are in the best shape to make the most of the opportunities and meet the challenges we all face."

"The transition to an EOT model – that embodies the collaborative culture that's always been at the heart of our practice – will build a fairer and more sustainable practice. It gives us a robust foundation for our future and, alongside our B Corp status, reinforces our commitment to positive investment and shared ownership."

NET ZERO CARBON STANDARD

Aardman Animations adaptive reuse selected as Net Zero Standard pilot

StudioHIVE Architects' adaptive reuse scheme of former buildings used by Aardman Animations in Bristol have been selected to be a pilot for the new Net Zero Carbon Building Standard.

The Bristol-based practice is working on transforming the Grade II listed "erecting sheds" at Silverthorne Lane in Bristol's Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone into around 80,000 ft² of sustainable office space.

The semi-derelict St. Vincent's Works site, which was formerly occupied by Aardman Animations and was destroyed by fire over 20 years ago, forms part of the showpiece 12-acre Silverthorne Lane development.

Introduced by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), the standard is the UK's first "cross-industry guide for achieving net zero carbon requirements across all major building types," commented the architects.

"It will play a key role in guiding the UK built environment towards achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050," said StudioHIVE, and is supported by the Carbon Trust, Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and the UK Green Building Council.

Matt Scott, director and studio lead at StudioHIVE Architects, said: "Working in partnership with StudioHIVE, Woh Hup and Atlas Land, the St. Vincent's Works project is poised to not only revitalise a forgotten industrial landmark but also serve as a blueprint for future sustainable architecture across the UK.

"We will be working closely with leading technical experts, receiving valuable guidance on how to meet the new standard's requirements within the context of a live construction project.

"StudioHIVE Architects' involvement in the pilot programme is a tremendous privilege and it underscores our commitment to sustainable design, aligning with our long-term vision to create spaces that benefit both the environment and society.

"Our team is dedicated to integrating innovative, sustainable practices across its designs and the transformation of St. Vincent's Works will reflect this."

Coleman Anderson Architects / Mikey Reid Photography

NBS Source
PARTNER
MULTI AWARD-WINNING
GLAZING SOLUTIONS
PART F, PART L, PART O & PART Q COMPLIANT
find out more
idsystems.co.uk/architects
t 01603 408804 e info@idsystems.co.uk
IDSystems
innovative glazing
25
years of glazing innovation
sliding doors · bifold doors · slide & turn doors · aluminium windows · glass roofs · front doors · balustrades

SITE LINES

Emberton House, Olympia: From cars to culture

Trevor Morriss, principal at SPPARC discusses how the practice embraced the challenge to convert a historic multi-storey car park at London's Olympia in the Streamline Moderne style into a hotel and school, as part of the site's cultural redevelopment.

"Adjoining the main Olympia building there is gradually taking shape the huge new garage which will solve the car parking problem of future visitors," reads a newspaper cutting from February 1937. As this would suggest, the world-famous London exhibition centre's Victorian architects could not have predicted just how far the rise of the automobile would change not only how visitors accessed the 'People's Palace,' but town planning at large, for the next hundred years. With around two million cars on the road by the end of the 1930s, the thousands that attended the buzzing exhibition centre every year needed somewhere to park their Morris Eights and Ford Model Ys.

Located to the Olympia site's north on Maclise Road, the five-storey car park was one of Europe's largest garages at the time of its 1937 opening, increasing the venue's car parking capacity by 1,200.

We replaced the internal structure with a new reinforced concrete frame and post-tensioned slabs connected to the facade

It was also one of the first car parks to use a double ramp system; staggered floors connected by curved ramps at each side elevation provided two separate routes out for traffic. This meant over 1000 cars could leave the exhibition centre in less than 20 minutes.

Aside from its practicality, this addition also gave the multi-storey car park (MSCP) its distinctive look. It was one in a series of projects that marked a step change for Staffordshire-born architect Joseph Emberton, perhaps best known for the Simpson's

Promat

Glazing for Life®

If your fire glass specification fails, you're going to need broad shoulders.

Designed and specified correctly, fire rated glazing plays a crucial role in maximising safety in buildings without compromising aesthetics or other design goals. But it must be deployed correctly to deliver on its promise.

Maximise protection and minimise the risks by choosing Promat SYSTEMGLAS®. These integrity and insulation (EI) fire resistant glazing systems are tested as complete systems to provide assured fire protection.

PART OF YOUR GOLDEN THREAD

Find out more

Promat SYSTEMGLAS® Specified for a Reason

Promat UK Ltd | 0800 588 4444 | promatglass@etexgroup.com

etex inspiring ways of living

department store building in Piccadilly. Lacking the ornamentation of his earlier Art Deco work, the car park's curves and long horizontal lines give it an elongated appearance that exemplifies the Streamline Moderne style.

Evolving needs

Nearly a century on, transport's decarbonisation and the emerging ideal of the 'walkable city' have called into question the priority that cars have long been given on our streets. With our masterplan for Olympia creating a state-of-the-art logistics centre underneath the exhibition halls, the former car park needed a new future.

Given the complexity involved in converting MSCPs to other uses, it is perhaps unsurprising that other buildings in this category, particularly later Brutalist additions to Britain's landscape, have been lost to the hands of time. Famous examples include Gateshead's Trinity Square, known for its appearance in Michael Caine's Get Carter, that was demolished in 2010. But with newly acquired Grade II listed status, adapting a multi-storey car park to meet the needs of Olympia's masterplan presented an exciting challenge for SPPARC.

The eastern portion of the newly renamed Emberton House is undergoing transformation into a 11,056 m² five star hotel, one of two hotels set to open at Olympia. Meanwhile, the western portion has been designed for a new school focused on the performing arts, as part of meeting the masterplan's cultural aims. Arranged over 6,474 m², the Wetherby Pembridge school includes a new community theatre that will complement the site's new creative uses.

Working within constraints

From the get-go, SPPARC set out to retain and celebrate the MSCP's architecturally significant exterior. Thought to be inspired by the Schocken department store in Chemnitz, Germany, the facade has horizontal bands of light coloured brick, between which are four continuous glazing strips that span the length of the building, curving at side elevations – faithful to the original composition. The addition of stainless steel balustrading and painted steel doors and windows call back to Olympia's Victorian roots.

The main challenge of converting an car park into other uses is the low floor-to-ceiling heights. Once all the requirements of a modern building like HVAC, lighting systems, and sprinklers are installed, this leaves a very limited clear height of around 2 metres. Adapting the height of the slabs was, therefore, needed to bring the building back into use, while ensuring these aligned sensibly with the retained window openings.

CELEBRATED CURVES
Trevor Morriss: "From the get-go, SPPARC set out to retain and celebrate the building's architecturally significant exterior"

VIEW FROM THE PAST
The MSCP seen on right of pic, viewed from the train station / Russell Road

With no less than 10 split-level floors, the car park's existing structure consisted of a traditional reinforced concrete frame with columns supporting its vertical loads and cores, with one-way reinforced concrete slabs. SPPARC replaced the internal structure with a new reinforced concrete frame and post-tensioned slabs, connecting these to the original facade. This created single level floors and increased the clear height for the hotel and school uses, with a slight variation between the two that reflects their differing requirements.

SPPARC also introduced two additional storeys, bringing the total to seven. This lightweight glazed extension is set back by around 8 metres to ensure the increase in height is sensitive to its surrounding context. The elegant use of glass, defined by a balance of horizontal structure and vertical pleated glazing that is inspired by the original Grand Hall, enhances the MSCP's visual cohesion with the wider Olympia masterplan, that utilises similar references.

Though adapting the MSCP required working within significant constraints, several retained aspects of the original design played well into the change of uses. Particularly well suited to the hotel is the building's ribbon glazing. Wrapping the exterior, this allowed for windows that span the width of the exterior wall, allowing in plentiful light and reducing reliance on artificial lighting. Facing a low-scale urban fabric, particularly from the north elevation, this also provides guests with a wide, continuous view over London from the second floor up.

A new lease of life

Opening in late 2025 as part of the rest of the newly regenerated Olympia, Emberton House blends London's architectural heritage with contemporary interventions that secure its use into the future. An important milestone in the developing design of this building type, the restoration sought to celebrate the car park's influence, while ensuring it contributed to the vision of the wider masterplan in a meaningful way. Originally solving a car parking problem, the building is enjoying a new lease of life, training a new generation of creatives and increasing Olympia's appeal as a cultural destination in its own right.

Trevor Morriss is principal at SPPARC

FIT ANY ROOF TILE WITH ISOLINE

Any tile, old or new, and still keep your roof watertight, even at a pitch as low as 10 degrees.

ISOLINE LOW LINE is our easy to install bituminous sub-roof system for installation beneath any roof tile at a pitch as low as 10 degrees.

ISOLINE LOW LINE. The long-lasting, waterproofing solution for heritage, retrofit and new builds that will ensure protection against even the harshest weather. And that's guaranteed.

BBA APPROVAL INSPECTION TESTING CERTIFICATION
CERTIFICATE 84/3055

MADE FROM 47% RECYCLED MATERIALS

For more information email us at
enquires@onduline.net
or scan the QR code.

www.onduline.co.uk

Onduline®
Lightweight roofing systems

James Traynor

PRACTICE PROFILE

ECD Architects

Kim Neville speaks to James Traynor of Preston-based Passivhaus fans ECD Architects, on how the practice evolved a series of strategies over the years to enable it to realise common aims of 'sustainability, collaboration and innovation.'

Founded in 1980 as Energy Conscious Design, the subsequently abbreviated ECD Architects merged energy research with architectural practice. It later joined multi-disciplinary construction 'one stop shop' N-able Group in 2007, which was in turn recently acquired by the RSK Group in 2025 enabling ECD to expand its services.

Joint managing director James Traynor reflects on the practice's journey, noting that, like many others, the firm has "fluctuated in size, with the UK economy and industry trends." Currently experiencing its largest growth phase, ECD anticipates further expansion, as the UK economy begins to strengthen.

With offices in London and Glasgow, ECD recently expanded into Preston to better serve the North of England. Traynor explains that the expansion was "important," as previously, projects were managed by staff commuting from London or Glasgow. Recruitment has been straightforward, he says with hires coming from across the North West, alongside staff who "deliberately moved" for a role at the firm.

Company ethos

Over its 45-year history, the practice has continually evolved. Traynor explains that the company's founding identity as 'Energy Conscious Design' was simply because it encapsulated "what we did." The firm embraced retrofit as a key means to sustainability, aligning with the straightforward principle of "keeping things, not just throwing away."

The company has a strong focus on social housing, "it's probably our largest client base," says Traynor. In addition, the firm also works on non-domestic retrofits, collaborating with schools, higher education bodies, and councils. Additionally, ECD explores low-energy design in new builds, having recently completed its first Passivhaus-certified school for Central Bedfordshire. Traynor emphasises, "We still believe a fabric-first approach for healthy buildings is the right way to go."

ECD's core values of a collaborative commitment to quality were established and written down via a company-wide process five years ago. Traynor notes that they guide every project, client relationship, and internal collaboration, reinforced by a 'values booklet.' Traynor says this is far from PR window dressing: "It really manifests in all members of staff, who all lead by example."

Convincing people of the importance of building sustainably hasn't always been easy, and such moves were often the target of cost-cutting. "It has taken time," Traynor admits; for the first 10 years, it felt like no one was listening, and sustainable measures were often cut out."

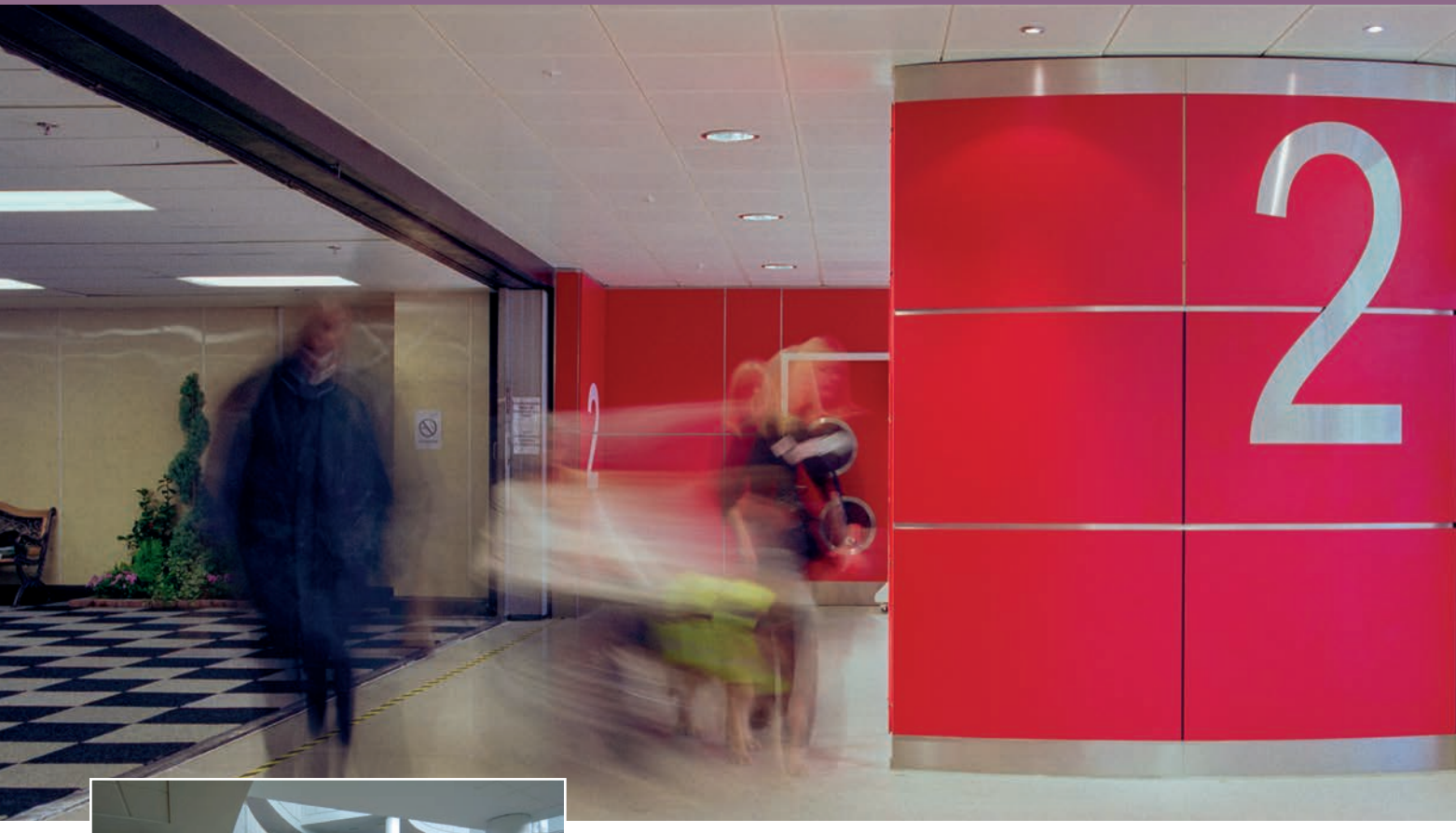
He summarises the practice's ethos in three words: "Keep it simple," giving an example of this pragmatic philosophy in practice: "We try to ensure that the building fabric is optimised so that costly M&E services aren't needed for operation and maintenance." This, adds Traynor, "requires attention to detail in construction, which is why we believe Passivhaus is the right methodology, but ultimately results in better buildings for our clients."

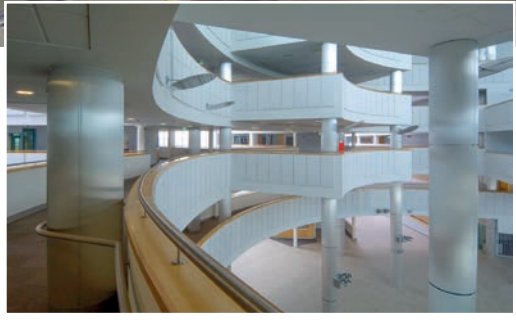
ECD is deeply committed to pursuing Passivhaus principles where it can, and has an impressive 16 certified Passivhaus Designers and an in-house Certifier in its ranks. The firm sponsors staff certification, ensuring they are well-prepared through PHPP training and key process guidance before tackling the rigorous exam. As a result, Traynor states, "they already know their stuff" by the time they sit down to take the test.

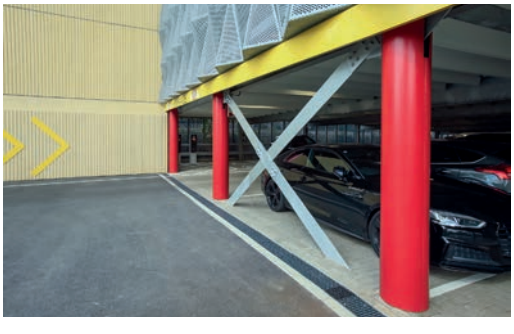
Bowhill housing, conversion of Old Miners' Institute, Cardenden © McAteer Photo

Style & practicality

PENDOCK RADIUS COLUMN CASINGS







The Pendock Radius range provides architects and specifiers with the perfect solution for concealing interior or exterior columns & structural steelwork with decorative, durable and practical column casings.

Incorporating both standard and bespoke shapes in a range of materials, finishes & sizes, Radius offers unrivalled versatility and choice. They can also be installed by our experienced teams to ensure the perfect fit and finish are achieved.

The Radius range includes:

Material: Ply/MDF; aluminium; stainless steel; GRP and GRG
Shape: Circular; square; rectangle; ellipse; triangle; polygon and bespoke
Finish*: Site-finish; HPL; PPC; brushed; polished, textured; patterned and Gelcoat
*Dependent on material

Pendock Radius is part of our extensive casings, enclosures and decorative architectural products range, which combines aesthetics with practicality and design flexibility.

PENDOCK RADIUS
COLUMN CASINGS

www.pendock.co.uk e: technical@pendock.co.uk t: 01952 580590

Thornhill Primary School © Trampenau Photography

Luxborough Street, Marylebone affordable housing © Timothy Soar

Design approach

While the company doesn't subscribe to a 'signature' design approach, its commitment to sustainability is evident in all their projects. One of the ways ECD Architects approach energy-efficient design, says Traynor, is to prioritise early-stage performance modelling. For the last few years, the company has utilised PHPP and DesignPH as 'primary modelling' tools to understand the likely energy performance of projects at an early stage.

A key part of their offering is providing an initial assessment free of charge. "This gives us the information to help clients make informed decisions from the outset," Traynor explains. "Even if a client chooses not to pursue Passivhaus, EnerPHit, or AECB standards, the methodology still delivers a far more reliable model of a building's expected performance."

Through its recent Knowledge Transfer Partnership with University College London, the firm is exploring possible ways to use artificial intelligence and machine learning to improve the efficiency of its workflow. "We are initially focusing on the retrofit process," says Traynor, "as it generates vast amounts of data that we believe can be managed more effectively." Looking ahead, they are also exploring how machine learning can enhance future projects.

One recent sustainability-oriented project by ECD Architects of note is Wilmcote House, an 11-storey residential block in Portsmouth that underwent a deep EnerPHit retrofit, dramatically improving its energy performance and extending its lifespan. Originally built in the 1960s using a large-panel system, the building was thermally inefficient and expensive to heat. Rather than opting for demolition and rebuilding, ECD Architects proposed a deep retrofit to significantly enhance energy efficiency, reduce fuel poverty, and improve living conditions.

Another key example of the firm's Passivhaus work is Thornhill School in Linmere, Central Bedfordshire. It expanded the school from one-form entry to a three-form entry, adding a new building that was the first of its kind in Bedfordshire to be designed and certified to the Passivhaus standard.

Knowledge sharing & collaboration

Traynor says he firmly believes in knowledge sharing, and how a commitment to openness and collaboration benefits the firm. However he adds that it also has a broader benefit for the industry.

There are several working groups dedicated to considering legislative changes and various aspects of business improvement

The firm has established partnerships with universities to support this goal. "We have partnered with educational bodies to both disseminate information [LSE] and upskill students [University of Central Lancashire] to meet the needs of emerging best practice."

Internally, ECD Architects also demonstrate the benefits of transparency and collaboration by sharing information on 'practice and performance' with all members of staff. "We aim to create a collaborative working environment where all staff understand both their role in the company, and how they can contribute towards our shared success."

The practice has developed various forums to encourage and nurture collaboration, incorporating a blend of online and in-person formats. "Junior staff are assigned a mentor, and we regularly support colleagues through professional examinations," explains Traynor. "We encourage staff at all levels to contribute to this, with focused themes on a variety of topics." Additionally, project knowledge is shared through regular design reviews, and there are several working groups dedicated to considering legislative changes and various aspects of business improvement.

Future outlook

Of many notable achievements throughout ECD's history, Traynor reflects on one in particular as having had the most significant impact. The Wilmcote House project, culminating in 2018, addressed fuel poverty and carbon emissions in a large 1960s housing block with another deep EnerPHit retrofit. He continues, "The resulting outcomes from this have been measured and disseminated by many different organisations," and says the project is recognised as best practice in its field, winning several awards. Traynor explains that this project has been a key contributor to the firm's success in winning other high-rise refurbishment projects.

Finally, having recently become part of the RSK Group, Traynor hopes that this further evolution will act as a springboard for ECD's continued success. ■

DRIVE axxent LS: the new concealed lift-slide drive.

Designed to look good. Made to perform. We have completely redeveloped our lift-slide drive to reflect this philosophy. The battery-operated motor is completely concealed within the sash and moves large elements both quickly and extremely quietly. What's special about this is that it doesn't just look like a manual solution. There is hardly any difference in the production process either. No thicker frames, no covers and no special design. All the components in the DRIVE axxent LS are easy to integrate into conventional profile systems and connect with Plug & Play. From manual to motorised in just 20 minutes. This has DRIVE!
www.siegenia.com • info-uk@siegenia.com

360° room comfort

INTERNATIONAL FOCUS

Showcasing the latest projects from around the world – visit **www.architectsdatafile.co.uk** for full information

CITYZEN TOWER, GEORGIA
ZAHA HADID ARCHITECTS

Zaha Hadid Architects' first project in Georgia, the 42-storey Cityzen Tower has been designed as a vertical extension of Tbilisi's new Central Park that incorporates 36 hectares of parklands.

Located in the heart of Tbilisi, the new tower incorporates residential apartments, commercial premises and leisure amenities. The Cityzen neighbourhood creates a new hub in the west of Tbilisi with a series of interconnected pedestrian routes, public plazas and gardens that encourage a sense of community and provide 23,000 m^2 of landscaped outdoor areas for recreation and relaxation.

Serving as the gateway to this new urban district of Tbilisi, the tower has been designed as a vertical extension of nature. A series of landscaped terraces extend from the tower towards the park, providing south-facing outdoor spaces for cafes, restaurants and other community activities at lower levels.

These terraces transform as the tower rises to serve as external social spaces for each of the office floors above. At the tower's higher floors, the terraces serve as balconies of the residential apartments with panoramic views of the park and city skyline.

Detailed wind and solar analysis has also informed elements of the tower's design to ensure optimal comfort for residents and visitors to Cityzen's public plazas, outdoor terraces and recreational areas.

Situated within Tbilisi's humid temperate climate, the 57,000 m^2 floor area has been designed to optimise natural ventilation. Its extended balconies and external louvres will minimise direct sunlight in summer and enhance solar radiation in winter to further reduce energy demand.

The tower's concrete structure continues the tradition and expertise in concrete construction of Tbilisi's local suppliers and workforce. Designed to achieve LEED Gold certification, the tower's procurement will target the use of locally recycled materials when available. The Cityzen development will also implement rainwater collection and reuse via its onsite reservoir. All planting throughout the complex will use native vegetation that does not require supplemental irrigation.

Cityzen Tower is scheduled to complete in 2028.

ROUND TABLE

Government needs to choose between net zero homes and housing targets

The Government must find a clear strategy on whether to prioritise net zero homes or concentrate on meeting its targets for housing numbers, as meeting both will be a major challenge for the industry. This was one of the key takeaways of a recent round table staged by Polypipe Building Products on tackling net zero homes, which featured senior decision makers from architectural practices, housebuilders, developers, and housing associations.

Chris Smith, head of new build at Polypipe Building Products, told the round table panel that attempting to meet both targets would be challenging: "A single, clear, priority must be established in the immediate future of housebuilding – achieving net zero or meeting housing targets. Meeting the two together in the next five years will be difficult."

The event was chaired by James Parker, managing editor of *Architects' Datafile*, and followed the construction purchasing managers' index (PMI) data showing that residential construction has fallen at its fastest pace in nearly five years.

Despite the concerns expressed, the group looked at how the industry could attempt to meet the two priorities in tandem, including in retrofit contexts, and concluded that there was need for early engagement between manufacturers and designers.

The panel also discussed how Building Regulations must avoid being restrictive, force the price of construction up or designers to opt for safer and less innovative home configurations. "Strong regulation is positive but it's important it doesn't hinder the creation of new homes." said Louise Scanell, design director at WW+P Architects. She admitted that making schemes operationally successful can mean "lots of embodied carbon. It's important that we strike the right balance between the two."

"Operational performance should be at the heart of new development," commented Kate Watson, sustainable communities team principal consultant at Turner & Townsend. The group also discussed how natural materials should be a higher priority, and gave the example of Southwark Council's ban on timber framed homes leading to a reliance on concrete. Kate Watson also discussed the possibility of using more regionally sourced natural materials such as miscanthus and straw.

Modern methods of manufacturing and construction could mean such materials have more means of entering the supply chain. But the event chair, James Parker, asked whether the industry would innovate in MMC at scale alone, or whether it would require outside stimulus. Kerry Heath, development and sales director at housing association Hexagon Housing, told the panel that the Government needs to incentivise the market otherwise change will not happen at the pace it needs to."

David de Sousa, director at AHR Architects said that industry would be unlikely to innovate if not stimulated to: "Building regulations must evolve to drive change, the industry has its own commercial objectives."

The group looked at how architects and developers could use carbon assessment tools early in the design process, to identify opportunities to minimise embodied carbon and select materials. Michela Ravaglia, Sustainability Business Partner at Wates, said the Tier 1 contractor is working closely with supply chain partners, "supporting them to start their Science Based Target journey."

Danielle Michalska-Morris, group technical innovation manager at Barratt Redrow said that changes to regulations had to involve industry to avoid clashes between imperatives such as air-tightness and overheating. "We have to carefully consider how all the different parts of the Building Regulations work together, so that a change in one area doesn't create unintended consequences in another."

The round table found that while a fabric first approach was essential for ensuring homes are futureproofed, doing upgrades without correct installation practices will prove counterproductive and lead to distrust among consumers. Such focus on adequate installation was needed before the successful rollout of technologies like NVHR (Natural Ventilation with Heat Recycling) systems and air source heat pumps could be achieved.

CPD FOCUS

Visit **www.architectsdatafile.co.uk** to subscribe to the CPD Focus newsletter – featuring the latest CPD courses, seminars and documents for architects

BRETT MARTIN LAUNCHES NEW CPD

Brett Martin has launched a new RIBA accredited CPD – '*Sustainable Features of Polycarbonate Daylighting and Facades*'. The presentation covers a range of topics such as the benefits of natural light, the advantages of polycarbonate as a material, including its low environmental impact, as well as the relevant performance regulations. The new CPD acts as an introduction to sustainability and design considerations when creating a facade for vertical daylighting.

daylight@brettmartin.com brettmartin.com/daylight-systems/cpds

CONVENIENT AND PAPER-FREE

Enjoy reading *ADF* but find it's not always convenient to have the printed magazine? Or has your workplace turned paper-free? The Digital Issue offers you the same content, delivered straight to your inbox and accessible via smartphone, tablet and desktop computers. Be among the first to read all the latest features, comment, interviews, and more, before the print issue has even been delivered! What's more, the Digital Issue includes interactive links to featured companies. Subscribe for free now.

www.architectsdatafile.co.uk/subscribe

LATEST NEWS, VIEWS AND MORE

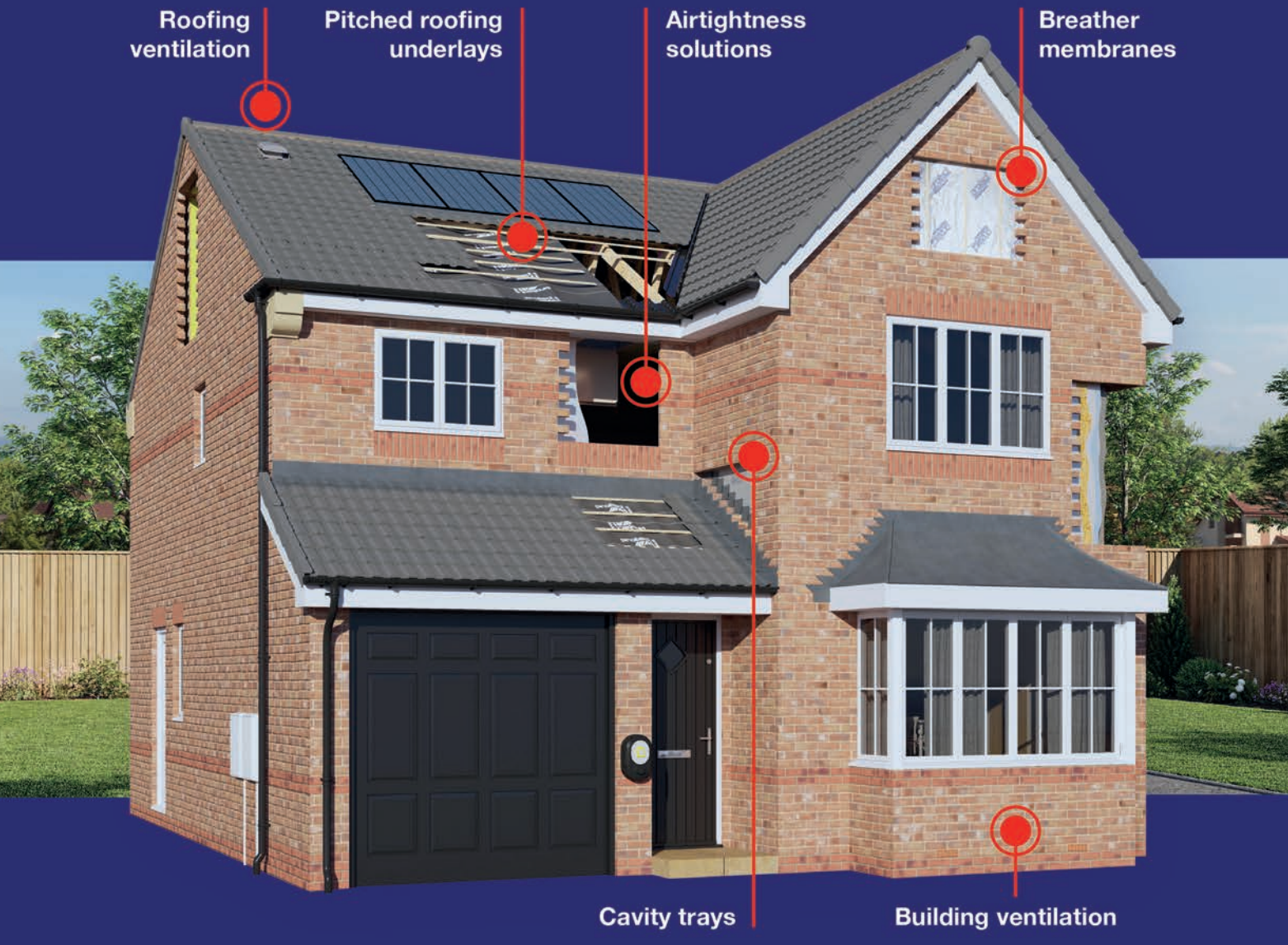
If you like to be kept informed of all the latest news, views, and promotions for the architectural community, the *ADF* email newsletters can offer you regular updates straight to your inbox. The weekly Editor's Choice newsletter includes top news stories curated by the *ADF* editorial team, while the monthly CPD Focus and fortnightly *ADF* Newsletter offer updates on products, services, events, and learning opportunities available from a wide variety of manufacturers and suppliers.

www.architectsdatafile.co.uk/subscribe

OUR COLLECTION OF PODCASTS

In a constantly changing environment in which content is consumed in so many different ways, our collection of podcasts enable adf readers to stay informed and keep up-to-date with changing trends and topical issues. Published via netMAGmedia's Building Insights brand, our collection of podcasts are available through architectsdatafile.co.uk and through most podcast hosting platforms.

insights.netmagmedia.co.uk/podcasts/



Our whole house solution

At the heart of housebuilding

Discover how our extensive collection of products across roofing and the building envelope works hand in hand to deliver better buildings and healthier homes.

Explore our interactive house

Scan the QR code or visit www.glidevaleprotect.com/wholehouse

glidevale protect

To find out more, contact us on **+44 (0)161 905 5700** or email **info@glidevaleprotect.com**

Glidevale Protect is a specialist UK producer, offering ventilation, condensation control, energy efficiency and fire rated solutions across the built environment.

Design solutions: How architects are using Cedral facades for modern makeovers

Renovating a dated building? Find out how Cedral can help. Cedral facades recently provided the design inspiration for a jaded 1990s home in Stirlingshire, Scotland. Not only did the stylish cladding provide the clean, modern look the owners wanted, transforming their home from dated to timeless. It also ticked several other boxes on their list of requirements, including sustainability, energy efficiency and ease of installation.

Eòlas Architects, a Scottish firm based in Aberfeldy, Glasgow and Aberdeenshire, were called in to modernise the split-level home on an elevated site with beautiful Highlands views.

"We knew the classic look Cedral provides would fit the brief and it's also low maintenance for ease and comfort," said Eòlas Director Oliver Hardiman.

"Cedral absolutely lived up to our expectations and the clients were really pleased with the finished look. Cedral cladding is very stable, doesn't expand and contract significantly, is very resistant to water and frost damage, maintains its appearance and is low maintenance. The renovation turned out really well and we were all very happy with it. I would absolutely recommend Cedral to others."

Cedral cladding was also a hit with the judges of the prestigious Livingetc Style Award for Best Exterior Cladding in 2024, who said: "Easy to use on both new builds and existing properties, it's the range of options available at Cedral that made this so appealing."

The benefits of Cedral

- **Long-lasting durability:** Cedral fibre cement facades have a minimum life expectancy of 50 years.
- **Contemporary designs and colour collections:** Cedral Lap facades create a traditional clapboard aesthetic while Cedral Click's tongue and groove design offers a modern, flush fitting finish. Colours are curated into four unique collections, with 21 on-trend shades.
- **Low maintenance upkeep:** Fibre cement doesn't rot, rust, warp or crack and is insect, bacteria and algae resistant; it doesn't need painting and is easy to clean.
- **Easy to install products:** Straightforward all-in-one cladding solutions.
- **Excellent fire performance classification:** Cedral materials comprehensively meet the fire performance classification A2-s1,d0 to EN 13501-1:2018.
- **Energy efficiency and insulation:** Rainscreen cladding helps buildings stay cooler in summer and warmer in winter for improved thermal comfort and energy saving, while ventilated air cavities improve thermal and acoustic insulation and help reduce condensation and humidity.
- **Sustainable options:** Cedral wants to build a more durable world and bring sustainability to life, each day focusing its business towards building a more sustainable world for those around us.

01283 501 555
infouk@etexgroup.com
www.cedral.world

CEDRAL

INSPIRING FACADES TO BRING YOUR VISION TO LIFE

Introducing the Cedral Collections. Four unique collections designed to help bring your vision to life. Based on research into the latest colour trends, they offer a suite of stunning contemporary options, that can be viewed in situ with our Cedral Visualiser app.

INTRODUCING THE

CEDRAL

COLLECTIONS

EXPLORE THE COLLECTIONS AT
WWW.CEDRAL.WORLD

BUILDING INSIGHTS LIVE

The Changing Face of Product Certification & Regulation

One of the key industry shifts in the new building safety regime ushered in by the Building Safety Act, is a more robust product regulation and information culture, to drive a new level of rigour on product specification. However, a multi-disciplinary round table recently staged at the Institute of Directors in London by netMAGmedia heard a variety of perspectives which challenged any perceptions that the industry is well on the way to such culture change. The Building Insights LIVE round table, a valuable chance to gain expert insights from architects, Tier 1 contractors, product testing experts and consultants, suggested there was lack of knowledge on the changes and a lack of engagement with the process.

The Act brings a new set of professional competencies for all projects overseeing design and construction, and a set of procurement 'gateways' for higher-risk buildings, mandating when project submissions must be made to a new national Regulator. Alongside this is a potential new regime for product testing and certification, under a further dedicated Regulator, at the Office of Product Safety and Standards (OPSS). This is changing the paradigm for both construction product manufacturers, and the specifier contingent, bringing in an overarching body to ensure the reliability of construction products' safety certification.

The round table set out some of the benefits and challenges of the new regime, with product regulation and certification having been called into question in the Grenfell inquiry and the Government-commissioned Morrell/Day report 'Testing for a Safer Future.' The round table reinforced concerns highlighted in the report, such as gaps in testing, and the fact that "up to two-thirds of products were unregulated" (due to not being governed by the Construction Products Regulation).

However, according to round table attendee Peter Caplehorn, chief executive of the Construction Products Association, the sector had made "huge progress" on product regulation, and told delegates it's "moving the dial on confirming and verifying what you have done." Although he did caveat this by saying that manufacturers could be divided into three categories; those who are "on the case," those who are "pretending they are making changes but who want to tread water," and those "who are happy to do what they have been doing for over 30 years."

The round table, being held in February, came shortly before the Government released its green paper setting out the consultation on improving the construction products testing framework, including minimum standards for third-party testing, new co-ordination

ROUND TABLE ATTENDEES

- **Peter Caplehorn,** Chief Executive, Construction Products Association/Construction Leadership Council
- **Bryan Cowey,** Specification Consultant/BIM Co-ordinator, SpecStudio
- **Ross Newman,** Technical Governance Manager & Regulatory Analyst, Warringtonfire
- **Seán McAlister,** Pencil & Brick
- **Chris Gaze,** Chris Gaze Associates
- **Mark Taylor,** Technical Director, Allies and Morrison
- **Mark Wilkinson,** Senior Technical Manager, Construction Products Association
- **Neville Grunwald,** Director of Facades and Roofs, Wates
- **Amanda Long,** CEO, CCPI Ltd
- **Paul Morrell,** Consultant & Former Government Chief Construction Adviser
- **Gabriel Pierazzini,** Head of Technical – Facades, Kier Group

FROM THE EVENT SPONSORS

- **Mike Vaczi,** Technical Director, Soprema
- **Tony Ryan,** Chief Technical Officer, Siderise UK

SIDERISE integrity in all we do

SOPREMA

between regulatory bodies, and clarified accountability across the industry. The event was sponsored by two manufacturers keen to position themselves as thought leaders on this issue – passive fire protection specialist supplier Siderise, and waterproofing, roofing and insulation manufacturer Soprema, both of whom gave useful perspectives during the discussion.

Getting a grip on safety

Despite the potential benefits of a more robust process for vetting product certification, concerns were expressed (by Wates' Nev Grunwald) that the sector "hadn't got a grip on the Building Safety Act," and that many in the industry thought it didn't apply to them. The credibility of the Building Safety Regulator was also questioned (on its staff's knowledge levels, a lack of direction on Principal Designers' remit, and a lack of predictability on how it was currently vetting projects). Some delegates expressed concerns that the BSR had already approved schemes which were "not compliant."

Other key issues raised included 'grey areas' in contracts around products' fitness for purpose, and the need to test 'systems' of products as assemblies, rather than just individual products; an increased requirement post-Building Safety Act. The round table also heard that architects and housebuilders need to grow their understanding of product testing, and there was support for the increasingly popular Code for Construction Products Information, for assessing product information in the industry across a range of criteria.

The event also saw comment on the industry research undertaken among architects by *ADF* in 2024, which revealed a range of views on the subject, and helped to drive a focus on specifiers' issues at the round table. While nearly half of architects surveyed said they had problems obtaining performance certification info on products, a slightly lower figure (32%) said they had difficulties with getting purely safety-related info. However, an overwhelming majority (84%) said that third party certification on safety and performance was an essential requirement for them.

Potential for a culture change

The round table chair James Parker asked whether we are beginning to see the "culture change" that Hackitt called for happening in the industry, as the national regulator beds in with its mission to "actively enforce construction products requirements." Amanda Long, CEO of CCPI Ltd said that "in terms of the industry change curve, it's very early days." Nev Grunwald of Wates commented that "trying to get the industry to engage" in terms of general housebuilders on the building safety agenda and product certification "is probably further away than we would like."

The round table, which included former Government Construction Adviser Paul Morrell himself, also looked at issues raised in his report, such as the potential for culture change in the industry. Architect Mark Taylor of Allies and Morrison agreed with Morrell there was a disconnect between architects and product testing, saying, "The world of testing and the world of specifying and designing is two ends of a very long road." He added: "Architects need to understand more about the context of the products they're specifying," but this was a challenge for smaller practices and time-pressured architects.

Morrell cast doubt on the possibility of the Government being able to change the culture of an industry as "diverse and fragmented" as construction is. He agreed with the chair's assertion that the driver which was likely to change behaviour fundamentally would be when an individual or firm is prosecuted, such as by the OPSS.

Representing SME builders as well as architects at hybrid design and build firm Pencil + Brick, was Sean McAlister, an architect who also sits on the London board of the Federation of Master Builders. He said the realisation that "all builders are going to be held responsible for specifications that the architects pass them, and that you can't just rely on that for meeting safety requirements" had "really shaken the boots of everyone at the FMB."

McAlister said there were major challenges to achieving an unbroken 'thread' of information through projects, asserting that many smaller builders "don't know how to keep a record, and have to swap out products all the time." In addition he said that the information around the Building Safety Act "hasn't been made for consumer consumption," excluding homeowners, and that explaining new duties to clients was very difficult, given the complexity of the language. He asserted: "I've had to rewrite it in order to communicate it."

IN SEARCH OF CLARITY
The round table brought together some of the leading voices pushing for greater clarity in information on construction products

ELUSIVE CULTURE CHANGE
Several delegates (such as ex-Chief Construction Advisor Paul Morrell, extreme left of pic), believed that a change of culture to a more robust certification processes was unlikely

Nev Grunwald had criticism for manufacturers "in the middle" who "are not bothering," regarding a change of culture to more rigour in product certification and testing – he commented: "we have let them get by for decades; we come up with another initiative and they say, 'we've heard all this before.'" He added: "But it's the law, it has to change – contractors of every size have to stand firm."

Amanda Long summed up the 'culture problem' in construction, saying: "The fundamentals of the culture change are about accountability, transparency, and responsibility. There are other sectors that embrace those more readily than this one does." She added that on the client side, while there was evidence that some clients "haven't taken the time to understand and buy into the responsibilities they now have," the CCPI offered clients a "demand side pledge," enabling them to "show leadership and drive change."

Peter Caplehorn suggested there were dangers to using prequalifications for project bids to ensure competencies and compliance under the new regime, warning that "people don't fully understand the principles of the BSA," including architects. Amanda Long concurred: "We have to be very careful that we don't use things like 'prequal' to just assume that we can just tick that box." Grunwald however said while prequalification was not the ideal route, it was a "good starter for 10" as a systematic route to change, as opposed to standards and competence being "driven by volunteers." Long countered that there was a risk that 'prequal' "could be misunderstood as the 'be-all and end-all.'"

Unsafe definitions

Paul Morrell offered a fairly damning critique of current and previous Governments' responses to the issue of testing credibility, saying "most of the questions in the review still haven't been answered, but without them you can't make all the other decisions." He said the industry, pre-Grenfell, had been "trading on good luck." Morrell also said the notion of contractual 'safety' was problematic and subjective, meaning "there's no duty to design or build a 'safe' building, you design a 'compliant' building." In terms of manufacturers, "if you're going to make them responsible for designing a safe product, but nobody's responsible for designing a safe building, you're going to make them the scapegoats."

Consultant Chris Gaze said the lack of degrees of meaning within the word 'safe' were a "big problem; I end up having to say 'how safe,' at which point I'm in the world of compliance. I want to comply with maximum diligence, but don't ask me to be safe when I don't know what safe is, and when we're so bad at judging risk and uncertainty." Gabriel Pierazzini countered that "there must be an agreed definition of what is safe." Mark Taylor added that when discussing fire, Government guidance relies on three adjectives for compliance: "adequate,' 'reasonable,' and 'appropriate'; that leaves a void when things go wrong: how would the courts interpret them?'"

The Regulator's reach

The group discussed the new national products regulator set up within the OPSS, including its current and future scope. Peter Caplehorn was positive, saying he thought they had "done a great job building their capability and capacity so far," and hoped "they would get full support going forward." He said they had already made "a few interventions, which has in the main been good for the industry."

Tony Ryan, chief technical officer at co-sponsor of the event Siderise, expressed support for the approach being taken by the new regulator for "not reinventing the wheel," and praised their engagement with the industry. Amanda Long echoed his words, saying that the regulator had been "very good" at engaging with CCPI, and praised the regulator's "product information management," and "behaviours in relation to products they've assessed, and how they've applied those behaviours across other products."

Despite Ryan's plaudits for the OPSS based on experience thus far, he cautioned that "manufacturers who are proactive and who stay ahead of the game embrace third party certification, and are already under continuous surveillance."

Nev Grunwald said there were persistent challenges in the supply chain: "We are being overly kind to the 'laggards.' He cited one "large manufacturer of facade components" who was pushing back against changes to bring more rigour in testing, and who had an "absolute belief there was no requirement for change in specification testing." He added that Wates was "changing the way we deal with our supply chain because of the issues we are finding; getting our arms around the lot, because there are holes in the testing standards." He asserted that project supply chains "should be acting as a team, not as combatants."

CCPI & standardisation

The CCPI is a voluntary, independent code for vetting product information, including 11 points under key criteria to ensure that information is "clear, accurate, up-to-date, accessible and unambiguous." A growing number of manufacturers are signing up, plus some Tier 1 contractors. Amanda Long said that even though the CCPI was currently at the stage of working with "early adopter" manufacturers, who were "willing and confident," even among these firms there were "differences between what is in the certification and the claims that are being made."

Paul Morrell said that as a general principle on testing, "we should work out product by product, industry by industry, when and what we should test, and why." He added: "We will start working these things out for ourselves, if our duties are clear."

Delegates said that some standardisation of product certification would be ideal, though potentially hard to achieve; Mike Vaczi, technical director at the round table's co-sponsor Soprema, commented: "Standardised details would be the dream scenario." Tony Ryan of Siderise concurred that standardisation for different product sectors was "key," however cautioned that there was a "lack of designated standards for safety critical products."

Systems thinking

One of the key problems which has led to a "disconnect around trust in the industry" – said Bryan Cowey of SpecStudio – is that products have been tested and certified as fit for purpose as single items, but not as systems assembled in individual site conditions; given the allied complexities this causes. However, this level of rigour is what is required in order to provide a fully robust system, according to attendees; others proposed the approach of a system of 'templates' to more efficiently cover a range of scenarios.

Amanda Long agreed that there is "going to be more demand for testing of systems," and pondered whether more guidance on "bringing together tested systems" could be provided. Tony Ryan agreed that it was "totally impractical to test every single detail within every single project." Paul Morrell's view was that while systems testing had improved immensely, "the question is, what are you trying to find out; you can never test everything."

Attendees focused on some of the practical issues around testing and certifying products and systems to create performance standards in common situations not covered by laboratory testing, or where they sit in interfaces with other materials in the building envelope.

Mark Taylor of Allies and Morrison gave a critical example: "Testing takes place between two pieces of concrete, particularly cavity barriers. This is one of our great problems." To try and address such issues he advocated "leadership from a single body, whether it be the Government or Construction Leadership Council or whoever, to find a way of fast tracking new GB standards."

Taylor also highlighted the issue of the UK still "relying" on EU Commission Decisions around some aspects of materials fire safety, without testing. "Some of these decisions are 25 years old; they're outdated." He said the Government could write modified UK versions of the Commission Decisions to allow industry to fast track aspects of construction "without the need for additional testing."

Sponsors' questions

Siderise's Tony Ryan proposed a key question to the round table: "How are life safety critical product manufacturers supporting design and specification teams in understanding the complexities of product testing and certification?" Nev Grunwald praised Siderise for being one firm that was "proactive" when it comes to testing, with a "supportive" approach "when we get to the difficult details." However, he said that there were "holes in testing" for many building details, meaning that teams "lean on [guidance] which isn't applicable," and even "make up the rules as we go along." Grunwald admitted that in order to "industrialise the roll out of standards for new tests" would require "people around the table who are all altruistic, which is difficult."

On behalf of co-sponsor Soprema, Mike Vaczi asked the group – in the light of the new safety regulators now being implemented – "how sure can we be as manufacturers the regulators will have the right knowledge and experience e.g. to understand fire test reports, updated Building Regulations, and BBA certificates?"

Vaczi cited a worrying example of a regulator approving an application from another manufacturer that wasn't compliant. Paul Morrell responded by saying "I wonder what will happen when the first building which has gone through the new gateway process suffers a catastrophic fire," adding that the Grenfell inquiry had recommended expanding the definitions of Higher Risk Buildings to "almost any complex building." He said he thought the result would be "the Government putting the burden back to industry," due to the complexity of the challenge.

However, Nev Grunwald said that while it was unreasonable to expect civil servants to have the necessary knowledge, "we still

PUTTING ARMS AROUND SUPPLY CHAINS
Wates' Nev Grunwald: "We are changing the way we are dealing with our supply chain because of the holes in testing standards; putting our arms around the whole thing"

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT
Peter Caplehorn said that the OPSS had "done a great job building its capacity"

haven't got the people in industry to understand the certification they are obtaining," for example around certain product assemblies.

Site issues – a scapegoat?

Wates' Nev Grunwald pushed back against the idea that safety-critical products were only as good as those installing them on sites, citing the Grenfell inquiry report: "How many times did we talk about the secondary subcontractor? Very few; when did we start making mistakes? Design, procurement, delivery." He added: "The problems start before we get to site, we have to start with the manufacturers who are dithering or doing nothing, and get them to start talking to their sales people."

Bryan Cowey added however that he regularly sees "outrageous specifications" from subcontractors which are "so prescriptive and out of touch with what a contractor's wanting to see." He added: "Ideally we should be providing a performance specification, so a contractor can pick what they need." The key problem, concluded Nev Grunwald, was that the competencies around safety "have not yet been agreed," and added that manufacturers and specification writers can both "be in a position where you put something forward that is actually wrong, and you don't know it."

Conclusion

The round table was a rare opportunity to bring experts in construction product certification together with manufacturers and specifiers including architects and housebuilders, to the critical topic of how the sector can build trust with a better testing regime. The Grenfell Tower catastrophe has had few positive outcomes, but one has been the beginning of a more robust, transparent framework for testing, certifying and marketing products.

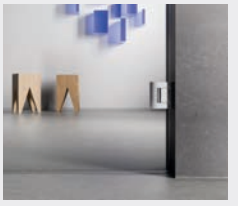
While there are major barriers to overcome and points of clarification needed, the round table revealed the aspiration for much more testing and standards, including systems. But as architect Mark Taylor characterised it, changing the industry is like "moving a supertanker," so the Government may have to step in to speed progress. He said that architects' standpoint on product certification has changed, however: "Architects used to believe everything that came from the manufacturer. Now we sometimes start from the opposite end and question; we find that whenever we interact with manufacturers in a critical way, there is a benefit."

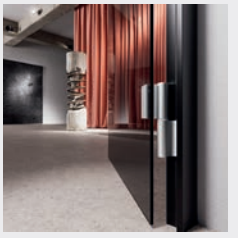
The Government has now responded to the Morrell/Day report in the form of a green paper and a consultation with the industry. But, as the sector seeks clarity from the centre (such as on its new 'single' regulator idea), it would do well to pay attention to diverse forums such as our round table, to identify shared practical concerns. With players such as SMEs urgently needing to engage in this improved but changing picture, and helpd shape the solutions, we can deliver the forum for such important discussions.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDUSTRY & GOVERNMENT

- **Chris Gaze**: You need a body of tests you can conform against that we can trust.
- **Mike Vaczi**: It's about looking at the volume of what is going through the testing facilities; with more and more systems being tested, how do they cut down the timelines?
- **Mark Taylor**: Accelerate and expand the suite of test standards, find the gaps, and a kind of medium ground which suits the laboratories, but also meets the needs of the real world.
- **Gabriel Pierazzini**: There should be a specific government sponsored review of the testing that is available, paying people that are the best of the industry, and not working in their spare time.
- **Seán McAlister**: A Government–funded open-source virtual physics building model (with building physics at its core), designed for AI testing and development to vastly speed up building product testing, compatibility checking and innovation to support Future Homes targets.
- **Amanda Long**: CCPI should be adopted by the Government; it's really simple, and we are learning there are a lot of benefits. It isn't possible to solve the problems of building safety by ticking boxes.
- **Tony Ryan**: More guidance and clarity around Gateway 2 submissions would be helpful to the industry.
- **Ross Newman**: An awareness or PR campaign to dutyholders and design teams around how the Building Safety Act has changed the Building Regulations 2010, specifically clauses 11A to 110. Also, the expansion of the fire engineering aspect of standards to cover the areas specifically excluded from the scope of the PFPF Passive Fire Protection Forum) Guide to undertaking technical assessments of fire performance of construction products based on fire test evidence (2021).
- **Bryan Cowey**: We need to bring accountability back into the product test area, not just allowing people to test one element of a certain system. We need the regime set up so it brings the trust back in.
- **Nev Grunwald**: We should be choosing CCPI products, and we need a funded Secretariat at government level leading on things such as product testing, certification and new standards – and they must include SMEs.

SIMONSWERK set to make FIT show debut appearance this year





Hinge manufacturer SIMONSWERK is set to make its debut appearance at the FIT Show, bringing its premium hinge systems to the UK's largest gathering of window, door, and glazing professionals. The show, which runs from April 29th to May 1st at Birmingham's NEC, will see SIMONSWERK showcase its innovative product range at Stand Q61, including the acclaimed TECTUS concealed hinge system.

With a heritage spanning more than 135 years in European manufacturing excellence, SIMONSWERK has established itself as a global leader in high-end hinge systems. The company's UK operation, based in Tipton, has been manufacturing premium solid brass hinges since 1977, serving diverse applications across timber, glass, PVCu, and aluminium door systems.

Visitors to Stand Q61 will have the opportunity to experience SIMONSWERK's comprehensive range of premium hinge systems, with special focus on solutions for heavy-duty, residential, and entrance doors. The showcase will highlight the TECTUS concealed hinge system, which represents the pinnacle of minimalist design principles in architectural hardware. The system's flush and linear design allows for seamless integration with various door materials, creating a uniform appearance that appeals to architects and designers seeking clean, contemporary aesthetics.

Visitors can also explore SIMONSWERK's innovative glass door solutions, including the EVO self closing hinge which is suitable for glass doors for all door opening angles up to 180° and is also available as a version with automatic closing from 160° to 0° – ideal for separating specific areas in high-value residential buildings, such as large apartments with a lot of square footage. Also on show is BILOBA, the self-closing screw-on hinge for glass double-action and single-action doors in upmarket residential buildings, which ensures doors can be opened manually with little effort and then close automatically with a set speed.

sales@simonswerk.co.uk
www.simonswerk.co.uk

Photography © Jon Wallis

BUILDING PROJECTS

PIXEL
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Pixelated vision

Architect MVRDV's new collection of mixed use buildings in Abu Dhabi makes a break from the city's architectural norm by breaking down facades into 'pixelated' forms.

In the ever-expanding skyline of Abu Dhabi, where luxury towers often dominate the architectural landscape, Pixel, a mixed use scheme designed by MVRDV, offers a refreshing alternative. As the first completed project in the Makers District which sits on Reem Island, a natural feature 600 metres off the main Abu Dhabi island, Pixel is claimed to "embody a new approach to living that emphasises community, identity, and connection to place." By merging innovative design with thoughtful urban planning, MVRDV has created Pixel to not only serve its residents, but to contribute to the cultural and social fabric of the city.

The mixed-use development brings together 525 residential apartments with retail, office spaces, and leisure amenities, all anchored by a lively central plaza. The 85,000 m² project reflects project developer IMKAN's vision to establish the Makers District as a creative hub for the UAE capital, and one which complements the cultural richness of nearby Saadiyat Island.

Jacob van Rijs, founding partner at MVRDV, explains the design intent behind the scheme, and how the architects hoped to make a break from the context of recent development in Abu Dhabi: "We challenged the residential typologies that have become the norm in the UAE. Instead of nondescript, isolated towers made palatable by a veneer of luxury finishes on the interior, Pixel makes it possible for residents to spend time outdoors, become friends with their neighbours, and invite visitors for a meal in the plaza restaurants." He continues: "It encourages a way of life that is not only enjoyable, but is also environmentally and socially more sustainable than the alternatives."

Design concept

MVRDV's approach to Pixel's design was centred on its seven towers, which the practice describes as "compact." These structures are strategically positioned at the site's periphery, optimising shade, promoting airflow, and maintaining clear sightlines to the waterfront. The placement enhances environmental comfort and establishes strong visual connections with the surrounding coastal landscape.

At the heart of the development lies the communal plaza, which serves as Pixel's social hub. The ground level hosts an array of cafes, restaurants, and retail outlets, while community-focused services such as gyms, wellness centres, medical clinics, and co-working spaces are housed on the floors above. This ensures constant activity throughout the day, fostering a vibrant and welcoming environment.

Central to the design concept is the way the buildings' facades not only visually but literally break down into individual square forms as they approach the plaza, giving a look of the volumes 'pixelating' at lower levels. Recessed sections further up the facades are balanced by sections extruding at the lower levels in a seemingly random fashion. The project's architects explain further: "The facades disintegrate into individual 'pixels,' forming terraces and bay windows that spill into the public space." This design element "invites residents to connect with the outdoors," with the cascading terraces acting as an extension of the internal living spaces.

PROJECT FACTFILE

Architect: MVRDV
Engineering & project management: Ramboll Middle East
District masterplan: RNL
Infrastructure: Parsons
Cost control: Turner & Townsend
Landscape & public realm design: Bjarke Ingels Group
Landscape architect: Verdaus
Lighting: Delta Lighting Design
Wayfinding & signage: Dezigntechnic
Vertical transportation: Cooper Wilcock
Security: WSP, Consquare
Facade artist: Nicole Martens

CLAD IN CONTRASTS
Facades within the plaza have pastel-coloured tiles in 14 subtle hues, providing a contrast to the building's rough concrete external finish

The facades disintegrate into individual 'pixels,' forming terraces and bay windows that spill into the public space

The fragmented nature of the towers gives the impression that the development is "organically grown, rather than imposed," say the architects. This design move "enhances the visual dynamism of the space, helping to make the new building a more inviting and accessible landmark within the district." The breaking down of the exterior form into disaggregated sections not only provides the project's distinctive identity, but also promotes interaction between residents and visitors in the plaza below, says MVRDV.

Material palette

The material palette employed in Pixel reflects a "balance of modesty and identity," say the architects. Inspired by Abu Dhabi's pearl-diving heritage, MVRDV employed a "symbolic interpretation of an oyster – robust and durable exteriors enclosing a softer, vibrant interior." The outer facades are clad in textured concrete panels, designed by artist Nicole Martens, featuring patterns that resemble oyster shells. This "bold yet understated motif" gives the complex a distinctive presence in the city's skyline.

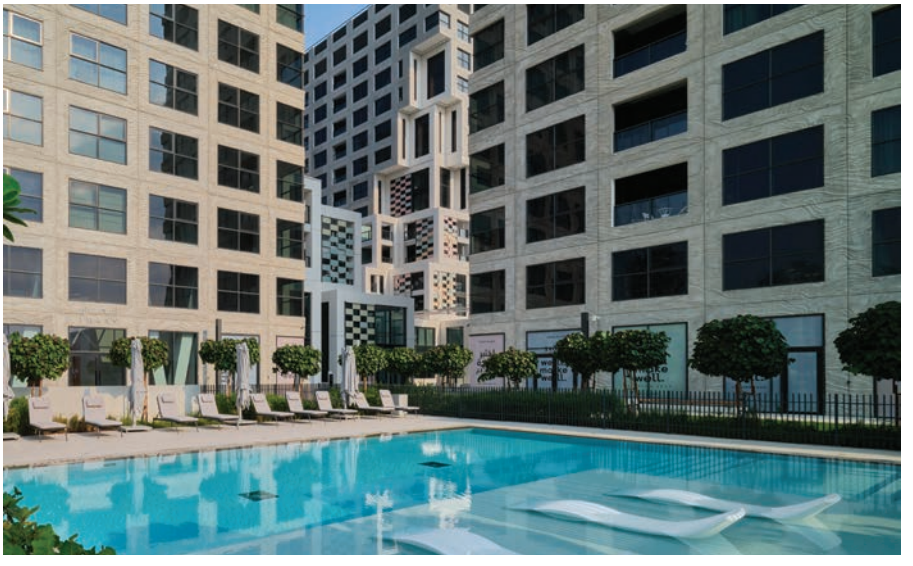
Within the plaza, pastel-coloured tiles are interspersed with glazing on facades, providing shading to interiors. The tiles, rendered in 14 subtle hues, provide a contrast to the building's rough concrete exterior, and a further visual disaggregation, "evoking the delicate iridescence of a pearl." The contrast also helps to provide residents with a sense of transition between public and private spaces.

Each tower is further distinguished by a unique interior colour palette to enhance wayfinding and give each building its own identity while reinforcing the project's broader narrative of individuality and community integration.

Sustainability

Pixel's layout and design take climate-conscious principles into account. The strategic positioning of the towers provides shade while encouraging cooling breezes through the development. This passive cooling strategy reduces energy consumption and enhances comfort during Abu Dhabi's hotter months. Additionally, water features and green landscaping throughout the plaza contribute to the microclimate's cooling effect, further promoting outdoor activities.

PIXELPLAZA
live
PIXELPLAZA
work
live
well,
make
well.
OPENING SOON
TMKAN



The integration of green roofs on the cascading terraces extends this environmental ethos. These surfaces not only add natural benefits, supporting biodiversity, they also enhance insulation to help reduce heat gain. The architects comment that the focus on "modest yet impactful design decisions ensures that Pixel embodies sustainability not through high-tech solutions, but through thoughtful, passive strategies."

Mixed community

The 525 apartments range from compact studios to expansive three-bedroom units. By blending affordable and premium residences within the same development, the project encourages and supports a degree of diversity among the residents. The central plaza provides an equalised desirability to the scheme: ground-level apartments enjoy the same vibrant and attractive surroundings as their higher-tier counterparts.

"The plaza is the beating heart of Pixel," says van Rijs. "It's a space where residents from all backgrounds, be it expats or locals, families or individuals, can come together to socialise, relax, and enjoy their environment. That sense of belonging is critical to the project's success."

By fostering social integration, the project cultivates a sense of belonging which the architects claim "transcends conventional residential models." The development "actively promotes interaction across generations, backgrounds, and social groups, reinforcing its identity as a place where community thrives."

It is clear that Pixel offers a great deal more than the mainstream residential development to date in the local context; MVRDV goes as far to say that it is "a testament to the power of architecture to shape vibrant communities." The architects conclude: "By embracing innovative design, thoughtful materiality, and sustainable principles, we created a space that redefines the concept of urban living in the Emirates."

"Pixel reflects a vision for a more human-centred city," says Jacob van Rijs. "It's a reminder that architecture should connect people – not just to their homes, but to each other." With its harmonious blend of social connectivity, environmental awareness, and aesthetic innovation, this project could be a shining example of what the future of urban development in UAE could look like. ■

Kingfisher Louvres chosen for prestigious Mayfair development

Kingfisher Louvres, a specialist manufacturer of aluminium architectural louvres, has delivered more than 600 acoustic louvre modules and 1600 metres of screening louvre blade for a new award-winning mixed-use redevelopment project incorporating a luxury hotel in London.

Facing the Ritz and located within the Mayfair conservation area, One Berkeley Street is a 19,500m^2 development, which includes the first 1 Hotel outside North America along with offices and retail units. It was formed through the refurbishment of two 1970s buildings and retains the vast majority of original structures, creating a vibrant, modern building that is sympathetic to its past. The extensive development, which was delivered by DE Group Contracting, Kingfisher Louvres' client and main contractor, features three new extensions including a two-storey rooftop extension.

Kingfisher Louvres' Technical Sales team collaborated with architects from Allford Hall Monaghan Morris to create a solution to screen the plant equipment situated on the roof and to also provide effective sound attenuation to minimise the noise from the HVAC systems. Kingfisher KA acoustic louvre modules, which provide permanent ventilation combined with the reduction of airborne sound transmission into or out of buildings, together with the company's KC120 screening louvres helped to provide the perfect blend of acoustic performance and screening.

A total of 646 acoustically treated aluminium louvres – a mix of KA150/20 modules and KA270/20 modules – were supplied in RAL 7047 matt at different depths to meet the varying sound attenuation requirements for the building. Bespoke penetrations were also required through some of the acoustic louvres on the roof to allow for a man-safe support system – therefore, each penetration needed a specially designed unit.

Also, on the roof of the development, Kingfisher's KC120 screening louvres were installed to form several plant screens alongside 10 single doors for access to the plant equipment. As the KC120's Z-profile blade can be angled upwards or downwards for screening from any angle, this made it the perfect solution to screen HVAC and other plant equipment.

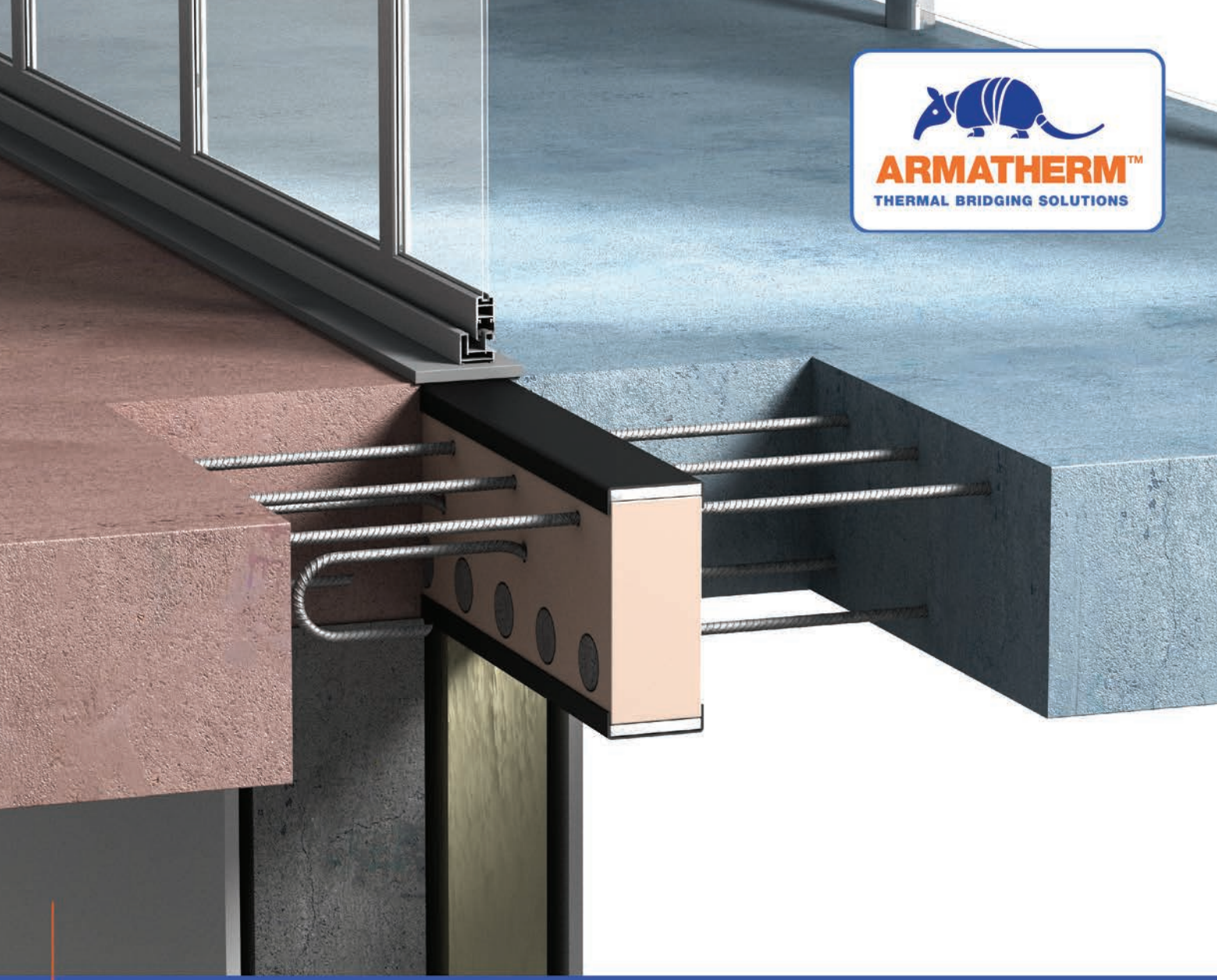
With the project requiring so many bespoke elements, a dedicated assembly line was set up within Kingfisher's Nottinghamshire factory. Every louvre panel was allocated a unique reference that tallied with a layout schedule to ensure they were installed accurately on site. The deliveries to site also had to meet stringent delivery timescales due to the restrictions of a busy Central London location.

Darren Rees, Project Manager at DE Group Contracting, commented, "This was a complex louvre installation on a very prestigious project. Not only did the louvres have to provide sound attenuation and screening for the plant equipment, they also had to fit with the architectural aesthetics of the development, as well as incorporating a specialist man-safe system which added to the stringent level of detail that was required. We were delighted with the technical and logistical support provided by Kingfisher Louvres throughout the project and the subsequent quality of the installed louvres."

The project won the Best Mixed-Use Scheme at the Building London Planning Awards in October 2024.

For more information, please email admin@kingfisherlouvres.com.

01773 814102 www.kingfisherlouvres.com



ARMATHERM™
THERMAL BRIDGING SOLUTIONS

Booth Number D770

THERMAL BRIDGING SOLUTIONS FOR EXTERNAL CONCRETE APPLICATIONS

The all-new Armatherm™ Cast-In Situ thermal break has been developed specifically for the construction material market and is the result of a decade of expertise in the field of thermal breaks, and the hard work and dedication from the Armatherm™ team. As the leading provider of thermal break solutions, Armatherm™ supplies a comprehensive service from design, right through to installation, with the aim of delivering simple and effective thermal break solutions for your projects.

To find out more call our team on +44 (0)1274 591115 or email info@armatherm.com.

armatherm.com

07-09 May, Excel London

It's all happening at UK Construction Week London

UK Construction Week, the UK's No.1 construction destination, is gearing up for its milestone 10th anniversary edition from 07-09 May at Excel London – set to be its biggest and most expansive event yet.

For the first time, UK Construction Week (UKCW) will be co-located with The Stone Show & Hard Surfaces, bringing together the best in natural stone, tiles, and hard surface materials. This exciting addition allows visitors to explore top-tier brands and discover premium materials for their next project.

To mark its milestone, UKCW introduces new sections like HVAC+R, in collaboration with Datateam Business Media, and Onsite On Hire, dedicated to plant and equipment hire. Attendees can also explore the Net Zero Trail and engage in discussions at the new Housing Action Hub on topics like green tech and the construction skills shortage.

Leading exhibitors including Carrier, Toshiba, Viessmann, Metrotile, and Viessmann will showcase cutting-edge products. UKCW will host over 300 speakers, CPD sessions, and workshops across three days, covering key issues such as procurement, retrofit, housing, skills, and innovation.

Seminars & keynote speakers

A highlight of the event will be the National Retrofit Hub (NRH) on Day Two (08 May), focusing on homebuilding and energy efficiency. Influential keynote speakers include:

- Kevin Hollinrake, Shadow Housing Minister
- Tom Copley, Deputy Mayor of London for Housing

- Alison McGovern, Minister for Employment
- Fergus Harradence, deputy director, Infrastructure, Construction & Rail at the Department for Business & Trade
- George Clarke, architect and broadcaster

Net zero innovations

The Net Zero Hub returns with forward-thinking solutions to help the construction industry meet net-zero goals. Highlights include:

- Skyline Skills Hub, addressing green skills for commercial buildings
- CIBSE's Setting the Standard for UK Net Zero Carbon Buildings
- Alliance for Sustainable Building Products (ASBP), featuring practical strategies for circularity in construction

Networking & special events

UK Construction Week London will offer valuable networking opportunities for professionals across the construction sector. Throughout the three-day event, attendees can engage with industry leaders and peers at dedicated networking sessions, including:

The Net Zero Hub returns with forward-thinking solutions

- Women in Natural Stone Networking, 8 May, 3pm; Stone Theatre.
- Design and Build UK Networking Drinks with Michaela Wain, 8 May, 4 pm; Culture Change & Skills Hub.
- Women in Construction Networking Event with NAWIC (National Association of Women in Construction), 9 May.
- Building a Safer Future Workshop, daily from 10:30 am; Culture Change & Skills Hub.
- Procurement Hub Buyers Lounge at Stand B760.

Additionally, the Role Models campaign will celebrate industry professionals, with the winners announced at UKCW Birmingham in September.

Register for free and learn more about the event at www.ukconstructionweek.com.

Article supplied by UK Construction Week London

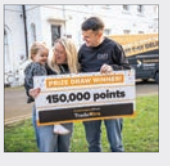
Armatherm™ at UK Construction Week

From Wednesday 7th until Friday 9th May, thermal break specialists, **Armatherm**™ will be attending UK Construction Week at the Excel Exhibition Centre in London. Located on Stand D770, the leading suppliers of thermal break materials to the construction industry, will be on hand to educate, share knowledge and answer queries. Make sure you head down to the stand to learn more about identifying where thermal bridging can occur, and how vital thermal break materials are in planning ahead to create a more sustainable and energy efficient future.

01274 591115 info@armatherm.com

UK CONSTRUCTION WEEK STAND B770

IronmongeryDirect's TradeXtra prize draw



IronmongeryDirect, online ironmongery specialist, is excited to announce the winner of its TradeXtra prize draw. David Marguet-Turner, owner and founder of DMT Facilities based in Broadstairs, Kent has been announced as the lucky winner of 150,000 loyalty points to spend with IronmongeryDirect's TradeXtra Rewards loyalty programme. David, a customer of IronmongeryDirect for over ten years who opened a TradeXtra Account in October, was thrilled to be presented with the prize and revealed that he is planning to use the points to book a holiday.

0300 303 88 21 www.ironmongerydirect.co.uk/tradextra

Vent-Axia kicks off charity football tournament

Vent-Axia brought together building design professionals for an action-packed Charity Powerleague 5-a-side Football Tournament on Thursday 20th March in Shoreditch, London, in aid of Cancer Research UK. Hosted by Vent-Axia at the world-class Powerleague in Shoreditch, the tournament saw eight teams battle it out, in a five-hour fiercely contested football tournament. Vent-Axia's Football Tournament raised a total of £1,625 for Cancer Research UK, the company's charity of the year for 2025, thanks to the generosity of everyone who attended.

0344 856 0590 www.vent-axia.com

The opinions of the architectural community

As part of netMAGmedia's research offering, *ADF* has been increasingly harnessing the knowledge and views of its focused readership to produce 'Industry Viewfinder' white papers based on reader surveys. These are documents which contain unique insights and data on a wide range topics that are currently fuelling debate in the industry, from Passivhaus to Part L. This audience research, providing real-world experience, provides us with the opportunity to better understand the needs of our readers and tailor our content accordingly.

insights.netmagmedia.co.uk/whitepapers

SEWAGE & DRAINAGE
PUMPING STATIONS
YOU CAN TRUST

T-T's Planet Range of package pumping stations is your trusted choice for economical and efficient sewage and drainage management.

MADE IN BRITAIN

BBA APPROVAL INSPECTION TESTING CERTIFICATION
CERTIFICATE 06/4303

- BBA approved since 2006
- Designed for use in domestic, commercial and industrial sites
- Smooth internal walls aid the hygienic disposal of effluents, avoiding smells and septicity
- Supplied with controls for fully automatic operation
- Units can be adapted to suit individual requirements
- 9000+ units sold worldwide with no structural failures
- Short lead times with most models readily available from stock

Scan to view the range!

With 15 expertly designed models, we provide effective solutions for flood and wastewater management, whether for domestic properties or large commercial sites. Don't compromise on quality. Upgrade your drainage system today with the Planet Range!

Contact us now to find the perfect model for your needs and experience hassle-free sewage and drainage management.

ttpumps.com
+44 (0) 1630 647200

Wernick®
BUILDINGS

Specialists in modular construction

WERNICK MODULAR BUILDINGS DELIVER...

Minimum on-site time

50+ years design life

Sustainable construction

Flexible expandable

Full project management

CONTACT US TODAY

0800 18 18 22 | www.wernick.co.uk

buildings@wernick.co.uk

Find out more
Scan the QR code

Modular's diverse benefits

Modular construction is redefining efficiency and quality in a range of sectors. Kasia Nowak of Wernick Buildings explains how it can produce sustainable and future-proof, as well as cost-effective buildings.

Clients in the education, healthcare, and commercial sectors planning to expand their estate should consider the advantages of a modular building solution. Offering a smarter, more efficient alternative to traditional construction, modular buildings provide tailored, high-quality spaces, as well as speed, flexibility, and sustainability.

Modular buildings have evolved far beyond the outdated perception of uninspiring, temporary grey boxes. Today, they can offer aesthetically refined permanent spaces that meet, and often exceed industry standards.

Modular construction provides a structured yet adaptable approach to design that ensures consistency, quality, and compliance. Within the modular sector, standardised components and processes streamline production while allowing for architectural solutions tailored to client needs. This balance between repeatability and flexibility enables modular buildings to meet sector-specific requirements with design integrity.

Architecturally, standardisation in modular design is not a constraint but a foundation for delivering high-quality, adaptable buildings. Advances in materials, finishes, and design techniques have elevated modular construction to new levels of architectural refinement while preserving the efficiency and compliance benefits of offsite manufacturing.

Modular buildings can be designed to blend seamlessly into their surroundings or make a bold architectural statement. With a wide range of finishes, fixtures, and fittings available, modular structures can be customised to align with your vision, ensuring both functionality and aesthetic appeal.

Manufactured in a controlled factory environment, each module undergoes rigorous quality checks, ensuring precision, consistency, and compliance with Building Regulations. This process is designed to significantly reduce the risk of defects, delivering a durable and high-specification finish.

Cost-effective delivery

Modular construction offers a cost-effective alternative to traditional building methods by streamlining the entire process. Completing the majority of work offsite enhances safety, improves efficiency, and significantly reduces project risks.

The offsite route can cut project times by up to 50%, ensuring reliable timeframes and minimising the risk of project delays Beyond initial savings, modular buildings offer long-term value through their adaptability. Whether expanding, relocating, or repurposing, modular solutions provide a flexible, future-proof investment.

The manufacturing process is driving innovation through design and project delivery, with 3D modelling and clash detection – now standard industry practices which enhance efficiency and precision.

A sustainable approach

Modular construction offers a sustainable approach to the built environment, reducing waste, lowering carbon emissions, and enhancing energy efficiency.

By manufacturing in a controlled factory setting, material waste is minimised, and energy consumption is optimised. Modular buildings are designed for adaptability, allowing for relocation, repurposing, or expansion, which aligns with circular economy principles. High-performance insulation, airtight construction, and sustainable technologies like PV panels and heat recovery systems improve energy efficiency and operational performance.

Additionally, responsibly sourced materials, such as FSC-certified timber and recycled steel, contribute to lower

Forest Research Centre

Advances in materials, finishes, and design techniques have elevated modular construction to new levels of architectural refinement

North Bristol NHS Trust headquarters

Swansea University Y Twyni

embodied carbon. Modular construction is a key enabler in achieving net zero targets, providing a cost-effective, scalable, and environmentally responsible solution for modern developments.

Case study: Southmead Hospital

One modular project in particular stands out as a prime example of how modular construction can go beyond simply meeting functional requirements, to also deliver architecturally satisfying and thoughtfully designed spaces.

The Southmead project focused on delivering a bespoke two-storey building tailored to the needs of healthcare professionals. The design was carefully developed in collaboration with the North Bristol NHS Trust, ensuring it aligned with the design guidelines, specific user requirements, and site constraints. The scope included external landscaping and modifications to the car park and access.

Stage 2 concept design was developed as a collaboration between the modular supplier, the architects and the trust. This enabled a quick project delivery as per the hospital's requirements.

In modular construction, where efficiency and speed are prioritised, a streamlined approach to design management allows projects like Southmead to balance high-quality outcomes with accelerated delivery. This project highlights how modular design teams can adapt traditional architectural roles to fit the unique demands of offsite, construction while ensuring that the integrity of the original vision is preserved.

The completion of the Southmead office is a testament to what can be achieved when modular construction meets thoughtful, inclusive design. By prioritising users' well-being, accessibility, and sustainability, a space has been created that meets current needs but is also adaptable for long-term use. This project highlights how modular solutions, when driven by a user-focused design process, can successfully enhance specialist education environments and deliver long-term value.

Finally, as an architect, the challenge of designing a workplace for highly sensitive, confidential activities presented an opportunity to create spaces that enhance accessibility, safety, and engagement.

Kasia Nowak is design manager at Wernick Buildings

Modern, sustainable and engineered to last

Q-railing launches EPD Certificates for glass, stainless steel and aluminium railing systems.

Q-railing has recently obtained Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) for its glass balustrades with aluminium base channels, stainless steel post railing systems, and aluminium glass infill and vertical bar infill railing systems. These third-party verified EPDs provide transparent data on the environmental impact of these products throughout their life cycle, aiding architects, designers, and contractors in making sustainable choices for both residential and commercial projects. The certifications comply with EN 15804+A2 and have been verified in accordance with ISO 14025.

"Introducing Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) for Q-railing's five main systems empowers customers with transparent, reliable data on the environmental impact of our products, allowing them to make informed, sustainable choices. By providing this critical information, we support customers in meeting green building standards, enhancing their own sustainability initiatives, and contributing positively to the environment." Darryl Holloway, Architectural Sales Manager at Q-railing.

"These EPD documents provide information on energy and resource consumption, waste production, and the environmental impact of manufacturing. Through Life Cycle Analysis (LCA), we have mapped out our key products, enabling us to contribute to a more sustainable construction industry." Robin Zoutewelle, Product Manager at Q-railing.

EPDs are essential tools in the construction industry, offering detailed insights into a product's environmental performance over its lifetime. They support carbon emission reduction efforts by allowing comparisons between materials and products to select the most sustainable options. Architects, engineers, and designers can utilise EPDs to make informed choices.

Q-railing's commitment to sustainability is reflected in these certifications, providing clients with confidence in the environmental credentials of their railing systems. By investing in EPDs, Q-railing aligns with the industry's move towards net-zero construction and supports clients in achieving their sustainability goals.

0800 781 42 45
q-railing.com/en-gb/service/downloads/epd

BUILDING COMMON GROUND

MAX FRANK®

Egcobox®

Concrete-to-Concrete Structural Thermal Breaks

A1 non-combustible stone wool insulation as standard:

- Resistance to fire classification REI 120
- Hydrophobic properties
- Thermal resistance

MAX FRANK Ltd.
www.maxfrank.com

Scan for the NEW BBA Certificate Reissue

FIRE SAFETY COMPLIANCE

cool temperate climate
CERTIFIED COMPONENT
Passive House Institute

CE

BBA APPROVAL INSPECTION TESTING CERTIFICATION
CERTIFICATE No. 16/5345

Glidevale Protect's Whole House Solution - everything under one roof

Glidevale Protect has launched its Whole House Solution - an interactive web-based specification tool offering housebuilders and specifiers seamless navigation of its building envelope product collection, ranging from pitched roofing underlays and construction membranes to loft hatches and building ventilation. The new resource is available on Glidevale Protect's website and has been designed to make it easier than ever to see how Glidevale Protect's extensive product range can be used on real-life homes.

Offering one of the widest ranges of construction membranes on the market, Glidevale Protect's portfolio is suitable for various construction types including timber frame, SIPs, CLT, and steel frame construction. It includes external and internal, reflective and non reflective breather wall membranes including fire rated options. Its airtightness solutions, which include air and vapour control layers (AVCLs), can

enhance the thermal performance of walls, ceilings, and floors, particularly when used as part of a system with an external wall reflective membrane.

Glidevale Protect's portfolio covers pitched roofing underlays for cold and warm roofs, and a range of roofing ventilation and accessories. When installed correctly, these products work together to ensure adequate roof space ventilation in accordance with BS 5250, allowing the roof to breathe and minimising the risk of condensation.

Its roofing underlays include air and vapour impermeable (type HR), vapour permeable and airtight (type LR) and air and vapour permeable (type LR) underlays - all providing a second line of defence against wind-driven rain and snow. Glidevale Protect's high and low level roofing ventilation solutions include dry fix ridge and hip ventilation, as well as slate and tile vents with more than 450 tile profiles covering the majority of tile and slate pitched roofs, while its eaves and abutment vents offer effective low level ventilation solutions.

The collection also encompasses airbricks, ventilation for walls and windows, and underfloor ventilation; cavity trays; and loft hatches.

Visit www.glidevaleprotect.com/wholehouse, to find out more. Follow Glidevale Protect on LinkedIn.

0161 905 5700
info@glidevaleprotect.com

Hi-spec deployment of EJOT Colorfast at new Birmingham logistics park

EJOT Colorfast fasteners have been used in the construction of eight new high-specification warehousing and logistics buildings at the Urban 8 Logistics Park in King's Norton, Birmingham.

The £32.9m development by St Francis Group in partnership with Tristan Capital Partners and Canmoor, has transformed a redundant brownfield site which was once the Triplex Safety Glass factory.

The development's eight new buildings are designed to be highly environmentally sustainable, as demonstrated by their BREEAM Excellent and EPC A ratings. The units, which provide warehousing space of between 26,000 sq. ft and 70,000 sq. ft., benefit from roof-mounted solar PV panels, SuDS drainage and air source heat pumps for renewable heating and cooling.

With an estimated roofing area of 36,000 sq. m, this extensive building envelope project required a system and component specification capable of delivering on the

client's demanding aesthetic, performance and longevity objectives. The envelope was designed to achieve a high level of air-tightness – just 1.5 cubic metres per hour – and thermal performance beyond compliance levels to make day-to-day operations by future occupiers as energy-efficient as possible.

Meeting the brief was the Tata Platinum Plus roof and wall system, specified to offer a guaranteed 25-year lifespan, in conjunction with FM Approved EJOT Colorfast self-drilling fasteners. These over-moulded colour-matched fasteners are approved for use with Tata building systems given their proven ability to provide an effective and secure seal that minimises the potential for water ingress and air leakage, whilst also maximising corrosion-resistance and visual appeal.

EJOT's A2 grade stainless steel bi-metallic JT3 Colorfast fasteners were used extensively in the project, with the integral nylon heads coloured in Sirius, Anthracite and Goosewing Grey to colour match the roofing and wall panels.

Industrial roofing and cladding specialist Roofdec was tasked with delivering the building envelopes, supported by EJOT UK throughout, including regular site visits by EJOT sales engineer Michael Swain.

01977 687040
www.ejot.co.uk/colorfast_hub

Harness the power of EPDs for sustainable specs

Dan Redfern of Marley explains why Environmental Product Declarations are an essential resource for architects seeking to specify sustainable materials.

With the built environment accounting for 25% of the UK's carbon emissions, architects play a vital role in decarbonising buildings. They are at the forefront of designing energy-efficient and sustainable buildings. With growing demand to specify materials that meet environmental and regulatory goals, having access to transparent, verifiable data on building materials is essential.

EPDs play an important role in enabling them to make informed product choices, ensuring that sustainability is embedded in the fabric of architectural design.

But what is an EPD?

An EPD assesses a product's environmental impact across its entire life cycle – from cradle to grave. Conducting a full lifecycle assessment (LCA) involves five key modules: raw material extraction and processing, manufacturing, transportation, the use phase, and end-of-life considerations, such as recycling or disposal.

These assessments are independently verified under the rigorous standards of ISO 14025 and EN 15804. Measuring impact across nine key areas, including carbon footprint, resource depletion and recyclability. This transparency allows architects to compare products fairly and choose materials that align with sustainability goals.

Beyond environmental accountability, EPDs also contribute to crucial sustainable building certification schemes, such as BREEAM and LEED, assisting architects in meeting sustainability targets and securing project accreditations.

Types of EPDs

Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) come in different types, depending on the scope and specificity of the data provided.

- Single company, product specific EPD: Provides data for one product, made by one manufacturer; applicable if manufacturing of a product at different plants uses the same process.
- Grouped / Multiple Product EPD: Includes similar products made by the same manufacturer, if the environmental performance indicators don't differ more than 10%.
- Project and Product Specific EPD: Provides data for a project or product requested by an EPD user, when the transportation calculation would differ from that in a verified EPD.
- Generic / Sector / Industry Average EPD: This type of EPD is developed by an industry association and these results are based on averages from the sector which is defined in the EPD.

The final EPD is issued by an independent programme operator, who follows a set of product category rules (PCRs) ensuring the products under review are assessed in a

This transparency allows architects to compare products fairly and choose materials that align with sustainability goals

The growth of EPD availability across the industry will help the sector make better, more environmentally informed product selections

consistent and unbiased manner.

Products can follow a self-certified or third-party verification route, in line with the two of the most important ISO standards.

- ISO 14021 Environmental labels and declarations: Self-declared environmental claims (Type II environmental labelling) is a standard for claims made by the manufacturer themselves. They are defined as: "an environmental claim that is made, without independent third-party certification, by manufacturers, importers, distributors, retailers or anyone else likely to benefit from such a claim."
- Conversely, ISO 14025 Environmental labels and declarations: (Type III environmental declarations, principles and procedures) — requires impartial verification via an independent programme operator.

All programme operators will ensure the carbon footprint assessment is followed in a consistent and transparent manner, and according to ISO standards.

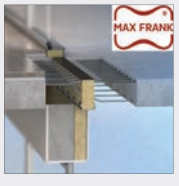
Understanding the full LCA of a building or different construction products within it, enables those working in the construction industry to make better material selections as they seek to reduce the environmental impact of a completed project. Access to an EPD can be an important part of this decision-making process, as well as providing acknowledged evidence for credits under important rating schemes, such as BREEAM and LEED.

The growth of EPD availability across the industry will help the sector make better, more environmentally informed product selections. However, this depends on easy access to third-party verified and transparent evidence sources, such as EPDs, so data-backed decisions can be made.

By offering EPDs, manufacturers can support those across the construction industry to enhance environmental transparency. As architects navigate the growing pressures of designing with sustainability in mind, verified environmental data, such as EPDs, provides an essential foundation for responsible specification, towards a net-zero future.

Dan Redfern is head of marketing communications at Marley

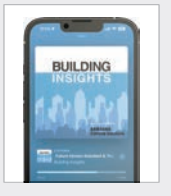
Non-combustible structural thermal breaks



MAX FRANK Egcobox® are non-combustible concrete-to-concrete structural thermal break units, supplied with stone wool insulation (Fire classification A1) as standard in the UK. The stone wool insulation is Hydrophobic, offering excellent water repellent properties, and its thermal and fire-resistant properties are therefore not compromised when in contact with moisture. Egcobox® ensures fire safety, thermal resistance of the building and structural compliance! The specialist Technical team are on hand to answer any questions you may have.

01782 598041 www.maxfrank.com

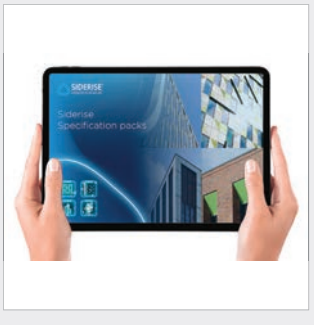
Our collection of podcasts



In a constantly changing environment in which content is consumed in so many different ways, our collection of podcasts enable *ADF* readers to stay informed and keep up-to-date with changing trends and topical issues. Published via netMAGmedia's Building Insights brand, our collection of podcasts are available through architectsdatafile.co.uk and through most podcast hosting platforms. We can host a series of three '15-minute Q&A' episodes based around topics subjects pertinent to your business and solutions you provide. These can then be promoted across *ADF* magazine, newsletters and social media.

insights.netmagmedia.co.uk/podcasts

Siderise Specification Packs ensure confidence and clarity when selecting solutions



Siderise have launched a suite of new digital Specification Packs designed to support architects, design teams, fire engineers, consultants and specifiers in collating the rich technical data they need to ensure accurate passive fire protection specifications. With versions available for curtain wall, rainscreen, masonry, and precast and sealed architectural wall systems, each pack concisely summarises all the relevant product information for the designated application. They provide quick and convenient access to crucial tools and information sources, including technical datasheets, third-party certification, standard detail drawings, BIM objects, specification information and clauses. Additionally, by including links to the latest information, users can be assured that they are working with the most up-to-date data and certifications, reducing the risks associated with holding outdated material. In addition, the Packs also highlight the enhanced support services available from Siderise at different project stages. This includes support with NBS Chorus specifications as a licenced NBS Specification Writing Partner. It also contains links to book CPD seminars, product training and more.

01656 730833 www.siderise.com/specification-packs

Transform uPVC with One Can

Leading UK paint manufacturer Bradite is promoting the benefits of its One Can product when used as a coating over uPVC.

Here, Operations Director Ben Mottershead answers some quick-fire questions on its application and suitability.

uPVC is particularly suitable as a substrate for doors and windows as it often requires little maintenance. However, as the material can stain or discolour and fade over time, painting uPVC is the perfect way to provide a quick update.

The two most important characteristics for painting on uPVC are adherence and weatherproofing. Not all paint formulations are suitable for use on uPVC because they do not adhere to the surface sufficiently strongly.

Why is One Can particularly suited for painting uPVC in this regard?

"The ambient cross-linking technology in One Can means the coating becomes harder and more durable as the reaction continues. Whilst the paint applies smoothly with a low-odour, water-based finish, it dries to a robust and durable coating. This process occurs extremely quickly – One Can is touch dry in 30 minutes and recoats are possible after just 1 hour."

How does One Can meet this weatherproofing requirement?

"The binder used in One Can is based on a high-specification binder, which contains a monomer that is particularly water resistant. It also contains proprietary wet adhesion promotion. Together, this means that One Can gives superb protection against the elements in the long-term, even as a water-based finish that is quick and easy to apply."

What outside temperature will guarantee the best results? How long will it likely take for the paint to dry?

"For best results, outside temperature should be 8-10 degrees or above, but it should be noted that the surface temperature will be considerably colder if applied at lower temperatures. One Can is surface dry within 30 minutes, and recoatable after just 1 hour – although exact timings will depend on the on-site conditions during application."

01248 600315
www.bradite.com

ZENON®
To overcome the problem of achieving a more environmentally conscious product, which still attains low U-value without significantly compromising the light transmission, Hambleside Danelaw developed the unique Zenon Insulator.
FIND OUT MORE

How Don & Low's Membrane Innovations Move Modern Construction Forward

Will Campbell, Head of Sales at Don & Low, discusses how cutting-edge membrane solutions enhance durability, efficiency and sustainability.

Founded in 1792, Don & Low has grown from a small Scottish textile manufacturer into a leading vertically integrated producer of construction membranes, geotextiles, industrial textiles, and yarns. Driven by innovation and adaptability, we've earned a reputation for quality, reliability, and originality—delivering advanced solutions to meet evolving industry needs for over four decades.

What competitive advantages does Don & Low hold in a dynamic industry such as construction?

What distinguishes Don & Low is our status as a vertically integrated construction membrane manufacturer in the UK, meaning we manufacture all the membrane components. Don & Low oversees every step of the production process to ensure that the Don & Low building envelope provides reliable, consistent performance on which the industry can rely. Thanks to this level of integration, we are strategically positioned to support the sector's anticipated growth by providing builders, contractors and architects the right tools to thrive. Vertical integration also translates into fewer supply chain disruptions and all-year-round product availability for projects, regardless of size, anywhere in the UK. Moreover, we offer unrivalled membrane customisation options and a broad range of professional technical services at no cost.

Since you mentioned the Don & Low building envelope, could you tell us more about your products?

Certainly! Don & Low offers a broad range of high-quality construction membranes designed to meet varied building needs. Our flagship roofing membrane, Roofshield®, has delivered trusted performance for nearly 30 years. We also offer advanced roofing underlays like the RoofTX® (vapour permeable) and MultiTX® (barrier) families, which are essential for roof durability. Reflective membranes such as Reflectashield® and VapourTX® Thermo boost thermal efficiency. For walling, we provide

Frameshield® and VapourTX®vapour control layers. Our range also includes FloorTX® flooring membranes and temporary site protection materials—supporting building performance and protecting construction sites throughout the build process.

Given the global push for sustainable infrastructure, how is Don & Low leveraging its expertise to drive innovation and address the specific environmental challenges within the construction sector?

The construction industry presents a unique blend of challenges and opportunities that align with our expertise and capacity. As a responsible manufacturer, we recognise construction's critical role in economic growth and shaping sustainable, energy-efficient living. We develop essential solutions that meet industry needs while supporting a more sustainable future through in-house recycling. The Don & Low building envelope averages at least 20% recycled materials. We also provide Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) with unbiased, standardised, and independently verified information on our membranes' environmental impact throughout their lifecycle.

In what ways are you anticipating and adapting to industry needs?

Innovation is in the DNA of Don & Low, driving the company to keep enhancing and evolving its offerings for the construction industry. As a market-led business, an experienced in-house Research and Development (R&D) team is the cornerstone of our innovation efforts. Don & Low's dedicated team of engineers and scientists focuses on evolving membrane solutions for roofs and walls to accommodate the Future Homes Standard and the ever-more challenging climate conditions. Additionally, we work in partnership with customers and partners to ensure that the company's innovations align with market demand and deliver tangible value.

How does this translate into product development?

Proshield® exemplifies the innovative efforts of Don & Low remarkably well, as it empowers architects to achieve airtightness in modular and high-rise construction more efficiently than ever before. Our brand-new membrane weighs 270 g/m², with one of its key characteristics being its three-layer structure, featuring an adhesive coating on one side together with a transparent silicone-coated PET release liner. Placed on the outside of a structure, Proshield® acts as a water-resistant and airtight barrier whilst still allowing water vapour to escape. Proshield® stands out from conventional membranes by eliminating the need for primers or additional fixes. It adheres seamlessly to a variety of substrates, including OSB, steel, gypsum board, concrete, aluminium and wood. This adaptability makes Proshield® ideal for use in offsite and high-rise construction, combining straightforward installation with high tensile strength and significantly contributing to a building's overall performance and longevity.

Furthermore, recent R&D advances have led to an enhancement of Roofshield®. Weighing 196 grams per square metre, Roofshield® is the heaviest air and vapour-permeable roofing underlay available, translating into even better tear strength, durability and protection against extreme weather conditions.

01307 452200 www.donlow.co.uk

Don & Low
MEMBER OF THRACE GROUP

Built on Tradition,
Driven by Innovation
Since 1792

Proshield®

Stick with the Membrane Pros

In response to the growing demand for enhanced thermal performance in modular and high-rise structures, Don & Low presents Proshield®. This self-adhesive, vapour permeable and airtight membrane is designed for walls, floors and roofs, with its advanced properties ensuring a fully airtight building envelope. Offering high tensile strength and effortless installation, Proshield® is also available in custom prints tailored to your business needs.

Airtight, the Peel & Stick Way!

donlow.co.uk

From Rust to Resilience

Restoration of 170-year-old ironwork on a heritage property was achieved with ease by a Devon decorating company, thanks to its discovery of Ferrozinc from HMG Paints.

Dart Decorators were tasked with a complete makeover of the Grade II listed townhouse at Ashburton, a small town on the edge of Dartmoor, and turned to Rabart Decorators Merchants for advice on how to tackle the guttering and other ironwork.

"They asked for advice on the external decoration as it was in such a poor state," says Rabart's area sales manager for Devon Peter Bird. "As well as advising on window, render repairs and external coatings we were able to introduce the contractor to the system of HMG specialist products best suited to tackling the ironwork."

"On the guttering there was 170 years-worth of paint to be stripped back plus some rusting" explains Dart Decorators' Oliver Price. Rather than a costly stripping or blasting process the Rabart team recommended to treat the rust with HMG's Ferrozinc followed by BDX Primer, then a finish with two coats of C71 Speedline.

Ferrozinc rust converter is ideal for situations where it is not possible or practical to blast clean metal substrates such as restorations on historic properties.

Ferrozinc's primary advantage lies in its straightforward application. After removing loose debris and failed coatings, a simple scraping and wire brushing to eliminate loose rust prepares the surface. Applying a thin coat of Ferrozinc to the affected areas completes the process and a white-to-black colour change confirms Ferrozinc's rust neutralisation.

"This was an old building that needed really good quality paints," says Oliver. "The HMG products were easy to use, and they took the restoration of the ironwork up to a different level." The guttering was finished in a shade of pearl which was colour matched by Rabart to match the rest of the restored facades.

The HMG system is fast becoming a go-to for decorators and professionals tasked with

this type of work. After a thorough cleaning of loose material Ferrozinc can be applied to all signs of rust.

The product goes on white and turns black to indicate that the rust patches have been neutralised.

Ferrozinc is then overcoated with BDX Primer, a high-build, anti-corrosive coating and followed by C71 Speedline, a synthetic alkyd enamel which provides a tough finish, and is particularly suited to areas with a challenging exposure to the elements.

0161 205 7631 shop.hmgpaint.com

A. Proctor Group supports collaborative approach to new Passivhaus-standard campus

Two primary schools, an Early Learning and Childcare Centre, and other community facilities will all be housed in the new £34m Faifley Community Campus in Clydebank. Due to be completed in 2026, the project is being delivered in compliance with the Net Zero Public Sector Buildings Standard (NZPSBS), as part of funding through the Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP2).

As such, the new campus will be certified to the Passivhaus standard, which requires thermally efficient, airtight building fabric. The campus' external wall build-up features A. Proctor Group's Wraptite® UV external airtightness membrane.

Architects Holmes Miller have embedded the Passivhaus standard into their work. Their track record in delivering Passivhaus-standard buildings includes East End Community Campus, which features A. Proctor Group's standard Wraptite membrane.

Like its counterpart membrane, Wraptite, the specified Wraptite UV membrane allows the campus buildings to benefit from moving the airtight line to the exterior face of the external wall. Doing so avoids a lot of complex detailing (such as around services and other penetrations) that often occurs at the internal face.

The composition of Wraptite UV makes it more resilient to the effects of UV exposure. It is typically used behind open-jointed cladding, though this wasn't a consideration at Faifley Community Campus with its masonry and sinusoidal cladding facing materials. A benefit of Wraptite UV's resilience is that it can be left exposed for longer if required, which may have benefited the construction programme in this particular case.

Wraptite UV is fully-adhered and doesn't require a primer, saving on labour and material costs. It's also vapour permeable, so can achieve a high level of airtightness without increasing condensation risk within the structure.

01250 872 261
proctorgroup.com/products/wraptite-uv

LAMILUX creates a brighter tomorrow for shopping centres

Crystal Peaks, a major shopping centre in Sheffield, Yorkshire, has been refurbished with three new large, glazed roofs thanks to the collaboration between LAMILUX, a leading provider of high-performance rooflights, and P&R Structural Glazing, a specialist in rooflight installation. The project involved the supply and installation of three Glass Roof PR60s, which were designed to enhance natural daylighting, energy efficiency, and the overall aesthetics of the shopping centres architecture. A total of 1,389 glass panes were installed across the three rooflights to give approximately 1,533 square meters of glass. Additionally, natural smoke ventilation was integrated into the glazing systems.

LAMILUX and P&R Structural Glazing worked closely together throughout every stage of the project, from the initial design concept to the final installation, to ensure a seamless collaboration. The installation of the East atrium rooflight, which boasts glazed dimensions of 24.5 meters in length and 5.5 meters in width at the apex, was planned for the Christmas trading period, which therefore required meticulous planning and consideration. By maintaining clear communication and a flexible approach, both companies successfully navigated the technical and operational hurdles, ensuring that the project was completed to the highest standards, while minimizing inconvenience to shoppers and staff.

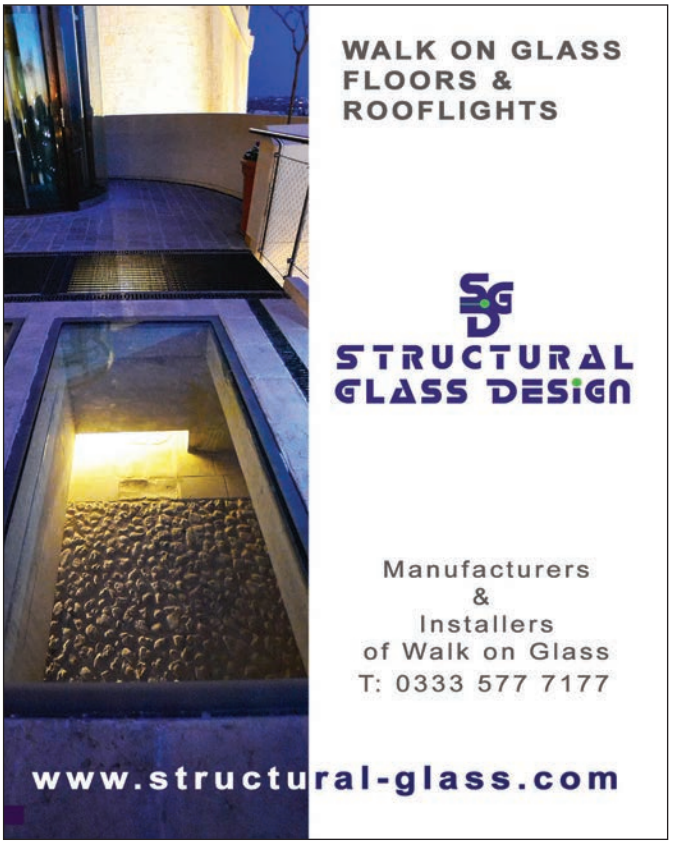
The LAMILUX PR60 Glass Roof is renowned for its versatility and exceptional thermal efficiency, making it an ideal choice for large commercial spaces like shopping centres. Its construction allows for flexible configurations, enabling the system to be adapted to different roof shapes and dimensions, which was necessary to accommodate the distinct shapes and sizes that differed among the East, West, and Central atrium rooflights of the shopping centre. Incorporating natural daylight into a shopping centre offers benefits of not only improving the overall environment but also contributing to enhanced sales performance. Furthermore, natural light contributes to energy efficiency, reducing the reliance on artificial lighting and lowering operational costs, making it a sustainable and cost-effective feature for shopping centres.

01284 749051 www.lamiluxskylights.co.uk

Elevate your home with a natural timber garage door

A natural wood garage door brings warmth, character, and timeless elegance to any property. **Garador**, a leading British garage door manufacturer, offers a stunning range of Up & Over timber garage doors crafted from high-quality red cedar – a sustainable hardwood known for its durability and beauty. Sourced from cooler climates, this premium cedar naturally resists warping, cracking, and moisture, ensuring a long-lasting, low-maintenance finish. Garador's Solid Cedar and Elizabethan collections feature exquisite craftsmanship and a variety of rich stain finishes, allowing you to find the perfect match for your home's style. Add instant curb appeal and lasting value with a Garador timber garage door.

01935 443703 www.garador.co.uk



BAL Waterproof 1C passes EAD certification for NHBC tanking regulations

BAL Waterproof 1C – the one-coat ready-mixed waterproofing system from the market-leaders in tiling solutions – has received EAD certification for use on NHBC-approved housebuilding sites.

From January 1st 2025, NHBC the UK's leading provider of warranty and insurance for new homes in the UK implemented new requirements for their members. This will mean that any new house in the UK that is built (foundations laid from 1st January 2025) will require tiling in wet areas to be tanked with an EAD certified system to receive warranty and insurance, if they are tiling:

1. Shower over bath OR shower with shower tray, with standard flow rate <12 litres/min – when the substrate manufacturer's guidance advises a tanking system is still required, or has not passed NHBC Table 2 assessment requirements.
2. Any shower over bath OR shower with shower tray, with a flow rate >12 litres/min.
3. Any wet room (fully tiled wall and floor, shower area).

To remain compliant, only suitable NHBC accepted products which form a watertight covering for walls and floors should be used.

BAL Waterproof 1C has been rigorously tested and adheres to all NHBC regulations, crucially receiving EAD certification ETA 24/1129 to comply with NHBC specified standard EAD 030352-00-0503.

BAL Waterproof 1C offers a number of benefits over other EAD-certified waterproofing systems and is also certified with a full BAL tiling solution as part of EAD testing requirements.

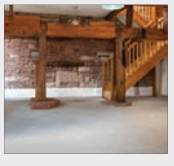
BAL Waterproof 1C is a cost-effective ready-mixed solution – which means no additional mixing is needed on site – and can be used on most common substrates without priming. It is ready to tile after only 2 hours,

meaning jobs can be completed sooner. Formulated with fibre-strand technology for improved strength, it can be applied in one-coat on walls (ensuring 0.8 mm thickness) and floors (ensuring 1.6 mm thickness) with a brush, roller or 4 mm notched trowel.

This innovative new product is lightweight with easy-to-apply rheology and provides excellent coverage of up to 6 m² – making it suitable for a standard domestic shower room, bathrooms or wetrooms.

01782 591100 www.bal-adhesives.com

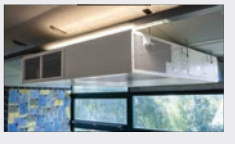
Screed for natural floor insulation solution



Ecological Building Systems has revealed a new lightweight thermal screed called Diathonite Thermostep.047. This latest addition to the range means Ecological Building Systems now offers a complete floor insulation solution, whether for suspended timber or solid floors. The new Diathonite Thermostep.047 by Diasen is a sustainable thermal screed, manufactured from cork combined with lime, which is four times lighter than a traditional screed. It is also five times more insulating and six times more resistant than traditional screeds, with a minimum thickness of 30 mm.

info@ecologicalbuildingsystems.com ecologicalbuildingsystems.com

Entire school ventilation solution offered



Breathing Buildings, a leading provider of controlled natural and hybrid ventilation systems, offers schools a complete ventilation solution to enhance indoor air quality (IAQ), energy efficiency, and sustainability. Providing an adaptable solution for schools, Breathing Buildings' award-winning Natural Ventilation with Heat Recycling (NVHR®) range offers hybrid ventilation, which uses both natural ventilation and mechanical ventilation in one system design. This is an ideal solution for commercial buildings with high heat gains such as schools.

01223 450 060 info@breathingbuildings.com

Exceed modern heating expectations

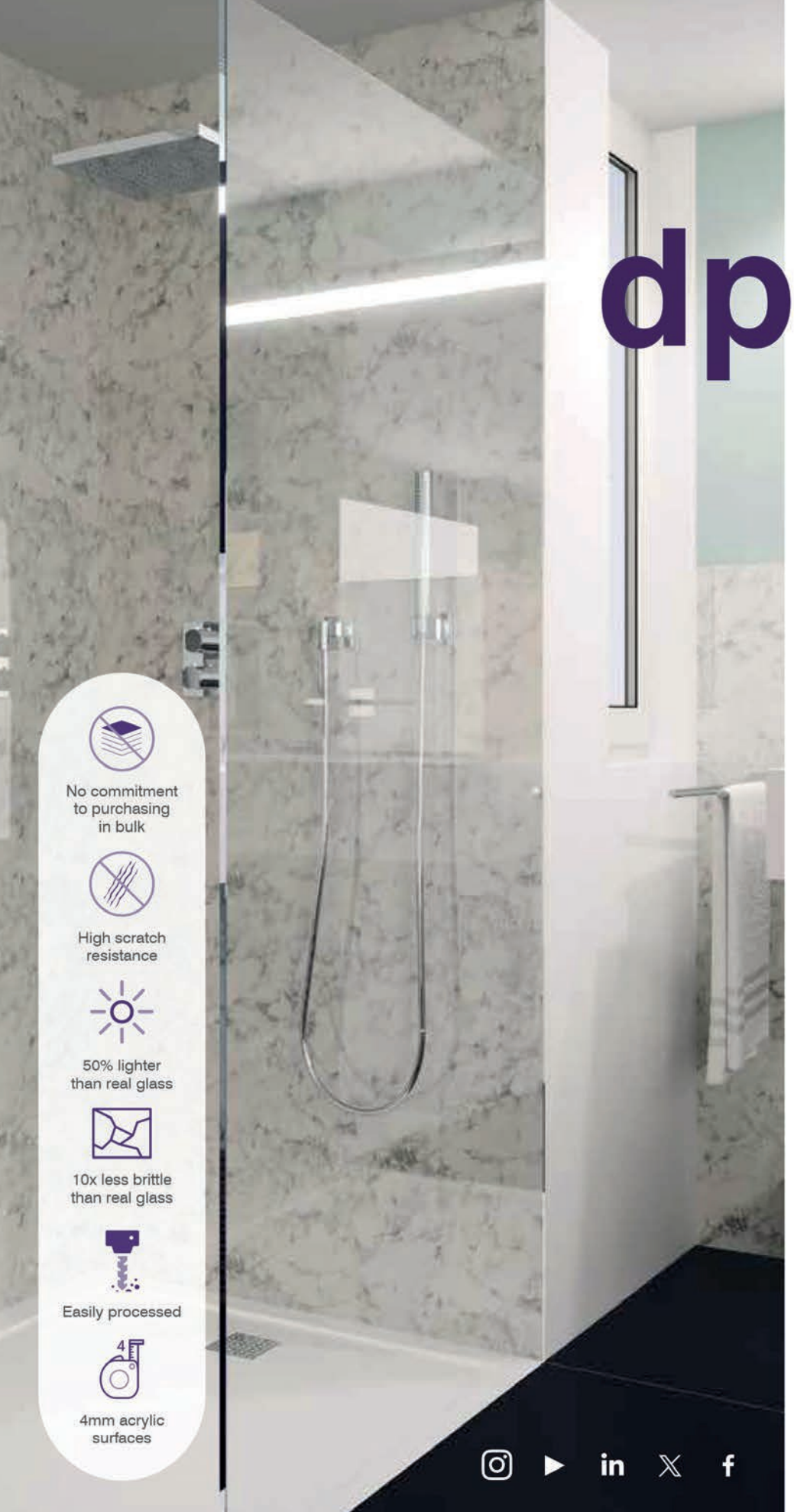
The Radiator Company, a leading manufacturer of designer radiators, now features the stylish and innovative Halo Electric – an industrial-inspired contemporary radiator crafted from circular steel fins. Fully electric, it provides additional flexibility when designing and furnishing a space, as it can be placed anywhere, eliminating the need for existing pipework connections. Made from steel, which is a lightweight material, the Halo Electric responds quickly to temperature changes, heating up and cooling down quickly to suit the demands of any space.

01342 302250 www.theradiatorcompany.co.uk

Capital and business alliance with tado°

Panasonic Corporation's Heating & Ventilation A/C Company has become the first heating equipment manufacturer to form a capital and business alliance with tado°, the vendor agnostic European leader in home energy management solutions. Through a €30 million equity investment, Panasonic will strengthen its collaboration with tado°. Panasonic and tado° have committed to addressing the specific needs of the European market, where sustainability and energy efficiency are increasingly prioritised.

01707 378670 www.aircon.panasonic.eu



the decorative panels group

YOUR PERFECT PARTNER

dp-slim Crystal

Timeless glass designs with the unrivalled strength of crystal

Designed for **vertical indoor use, dp-slim Crystal** is perfect for **splashback** and **wet wall** applications. With its **easy to clean, hygienic surface, dp-slim Crystal** is a suitable replacement for traditional bathroom and kitchen wall tiles. **dp-slim Crystal** is the ideal glass, tile or traditional stone and marble substitute for all hospitality and retail environments.

Available to **order in quantities from as little as just one laminated acrylic sheet** with dimensions:
2800mm x 1300mm x 4mm.

Visit our website, **www.decorativepanels.co.uk** to explore the full **dp-slim collection** within our **dp-limitless portfolio.**

- No commitment to purchasing in bulk
- High scratch resistance
- 50% lighter than real glass
- 10x less brittle than real glass
- Easily processed
- 4mm acrylic surfaces

REHAU

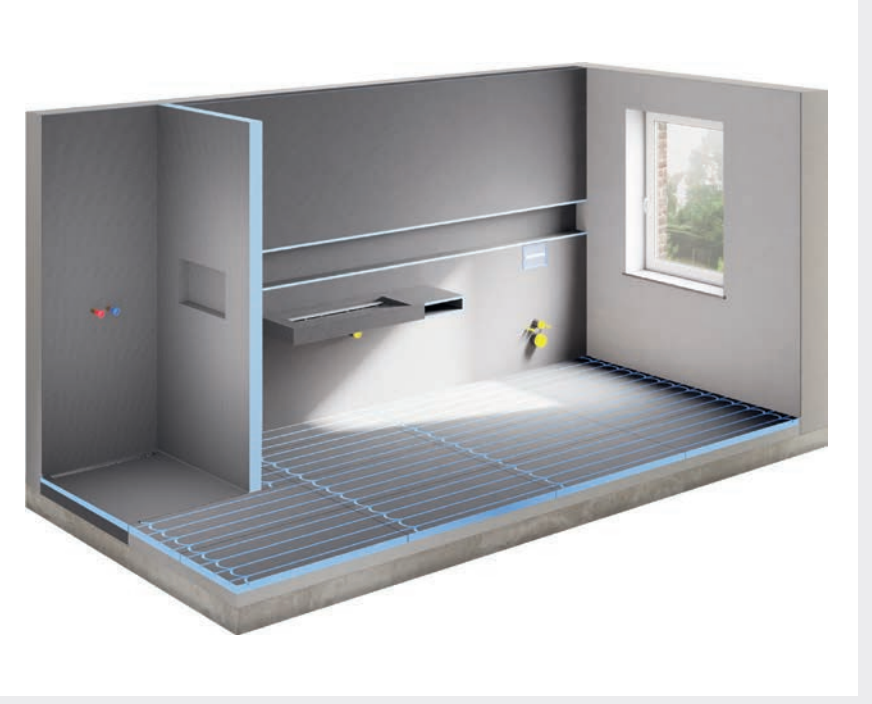
dp-limitless

www.decorativepanels.co.uk

Future-Proofing Wet Rooms and Bathrooms

Ensuring compliance with current and upcoming legislation is a critical focus for architects and specifiers aiming to create sustainable, future-proofed buildings. One such area of increasing importance is waterproofing in wet rooms and bathrooms, with the NHBC Technical Guidance 9.2/06 now setting stricter requirements. From 1st January 2025, any new-build project requiring an NHBC warranty must comply with these updated guidelines, ensuring the longevity and integrity of the building's structure. Under the new guidance:

- Magnesium oxide boards must not be used as a tiling substrate.
- In wet rooms or bathrooms with power showers, only tile backer boards with acceptable technical approvals are permitted.
- All waterproofing systems must be backed by appropriate third-party certifications acceptable by NHBC and must also be fully compatible with the tile, adhesive, and grout selected for the project.



A Proven Solution for NHBC Compliance

For specifiers seeking a fully certified, systemised waterproofing solution, wedi's XPS boards and shower formers provide a reliable answer; they not only enhance both performance and efficiency, but are also fully compliant with NHBC's updated technical guidance. The key certifications these tried-and-tested materials carry include:

- European Technical Approval (ETA)
- Environmental Product Declarations (EPD)
- A+ VOC label for indoor air quality
- CE, UKCA, and UKNI markings
- BBA certifications

Simplifying Specification with a Complete Waterproofing System

wedi building boards offer 100% waterproof performance, creating a seamless, modular system that reduces installation steps while minimising the risk of failure. Supporting up to 133kg/m², they are suitable for all tile formats including natural stone, and with a U-value of 0.036 W/mK, they also contribute to energy efficiency by preventing heat loss, making them an ideal substrate for under-tile heating (UTH) systems. The range includes interlocking XPS components such as floor-level shower elements, benches, niches and partition walls.

Since joining the Ardex Group in 2021, wedi can also offer compatible adhesives and grouts with a comprehensive 10-year product warranty covering everything beneath the tiles – ensuring a single-source solution with complete manufacturer accountability.

Supporting Future Homes Standards

With the Future Homes Standard coming into effect in 2025, all new homes must be designed with improved energy efficiency to reduce carbon emissions by 75–80%. While waterproofing itself does not directly reduce carbon emissions, wedi's solutions create the optimal conditions for integrating energy-saving technologies.

For example, wedi PreLine building boards with factory-cut grooves for precise pipe installation, improve heating system response times by up to 70% – ideal for supporting heat pump-operated water heating systems.

Flexible, Future-Proofed Design with Fundo Solutions

wedi's Fundo range offers floor-level shower elements that provide flexibility in design and ease of installation while maintaining full NHBC compliance. The latest Fundo Flex system however, introduces an entirely new level of adaptability:

- A fully adjustable channel element that can be positioned along the long or short side, close to the wall, centrally, or anywhere in between.
- Stepped rebates for precise integration of the complementary sloping boards ensuring a fully sealed, level shower floor.
- Flexibly customisable components – the channel element, the slim channel profile as well as the sloping boards can be cut, and arranged to form a tailored solution.

Trusted Compliance, Streamlined Specification

With over 40 years of industry expertise, wedi continues to set the standard for waterproofing, insulation, and energy-efficient solutions in wet rooms and bathrooms. By simplifying specification and ensuring full NHBC compliance, wedi products allow architects and specifiers to focus on design, confident in the long-term performance and sustainability of their projects.

www.wedi.net

Precisely flexible

...wedi®

Your partner in innovation

wedi Fundo sloping board

Available in various formats, with or without step-fold for optimal installation in/on screed or suspended timber floor

wedi Fundo shower channel 1.0

Grid incl. hair trap

The grid is removeable for thorough and easy cleaning

Channel profile incl. adapter

The channel, which is only 35mm wide can be individually shortened and is compatible with tile thicknesses from 6 to 25mm

wedi Fundo Wave drain

Adapter

With a bayonet closure for a simple and secure watertight connection between the channel element and the drain body

Drain body

Almost self-cleaning with integrated odour trap, for hygienic, odour-free living (DN50 & DN40 horizontal)

Fundo Flex

Channel element

The core of the shower solution is available in two lengths, with step-fold on both sides for a secure connection in any configuration

Eccentric

The eccentric enables precise alignment of the channel with the wall and also allows adjustment to its distance from the wall

Visualise a sleek design with a discreetly slender channel profile. Something like this.

Impressive.
Don't you think?

wedi Systems (UK) Ltd
0161 864 2336
www.wedi.net
enquiries@wedi.co.uk

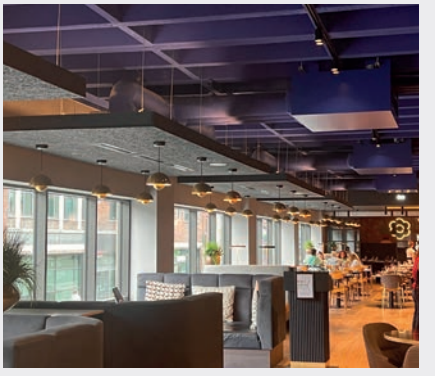
Taking acoustics to new heights

Malmaison York is a stunning boutique hotel comprising 150 bedrooms, F&B venues, the brand's signature Work + Play meeting and event spaces, spa and gym. With interiors designed by Studio Moren and sited in the iconic former Aviva building in central York, the 1960s brutalist office building has been re-configured to create a bespoke venue befitting its unique location and heritage.

The redesign includes restoring eight floors of concrete floorplates as well as facades and walls. Two new bars and restaurants were incorporated into the scheme including the Sora Sky Bar with a large terrace overlooking York Minster.

With so many hard surfaces in the design, Studio Moren needed to find a solution to control acoustics within the spaces from the restaurants and decided to use Troldtekt's wood wool acoustic panels as part of the ceiling designs. Specified in an innovative two-tone design, the destination restaurant complements the wider 1960s inspiration and the brand's playful image.

Troldtekt's wood wool acoustic panels are frequently specified in schools, restaurants, leisure spaces and commercial properties where noise levels can be uncomfortably loud. Panels are available in a variety of different structures and colours, combining optimal sound absorption with an award-winning design. The Troldtekt range has a minimum expected life cycle of 50 years coupled with excellent resistance to humidity and tested



to meet ball impact standards. The range is available in various sizes and structures, from extreme fine to fine. They can be supplied as natural wood, natural unpainted FUTURECEM™ offering a reduced carbon footprint and finished in almost any RAL or NCS colour.

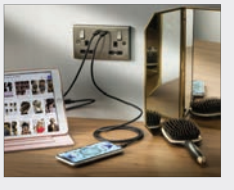
info@troldtekt.co.uk
www.troldtekt.com

Widest range of towel rail radiators

Stelrad Radiators offers the widest range of towel rail radiators for central heating systems and for homes where electric radiators are installed. The company stocks a huge range of options for wet heating systems in a choice of finishes – chrome, stainless steel, white and a selection of colours – and the new electric radiator range offers a similar range of choices. To see the full range of towel rail and bathroom radiator options head to the website where you'll find an option for every application and technical details of every radiator.

0800 876 6813 www.stelrad.com/trade

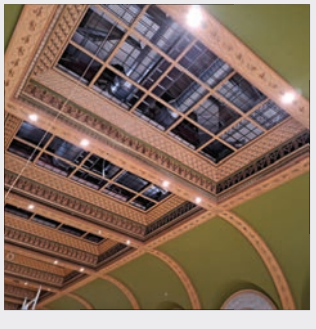
The market's most powerful USB socket



Delivering faster and more efficient charging for modern devices, the 13A SP Switched Socket with Dual USB-C (65W Dual Fastcharge) from **Knightsbridge** – one of the UK's leading manufacturers of wiring accessories and lighting – is the UK market's most powerful dual socket featuring USB charging and represents an important upgrade to the company's existing 45W model. Between the two sockets, Knightsbridge now offers a choice of performance and versatility to meet the needs of tech-savvy users.

01582 887760 www.mlaccessories.co.uk

Gilberts proves how to balance cost-effective restoration



The New Victoria was the largest "picture palace" outside of London when it opened in 1930. Having closed its doors in 2000, the derelict building containing auditorium, ballroom, restaurant and lounges was facing demolition. It is being revitalised by Bradford Live into a modern, low carbon entertainment space with emphasis on retaining as much of the original interior decor as possible. The talents of **Gilberts Blackpool** were called upon to fulfil the discreet delivery and exhaust of air to ensure compliant ambient temperature and indoor air quality even when filled to capacity. The venue expects to welcome 300,000 visitors a year. Gilberts has provided a raft of grilles and diffusers, including bespoke variations to enhance their intrinsic performance within the confines of the existing building fabric. Chris Patchett, Pitts Wilson Mechanical Contracts Manager added: "Gilberts has performed very well, being proactive and helpful throughout the project." Gilberts has a significant portfolio of delivering ventilation solutions for entertainment and leisure venues, including the Royal Albert Hall and Manchester's PrintWorks.

01253 766911 info@gilbertsblackpool.com

Kitchen colour philosophy

The careful use of colours in the kitchen shapes aesthetics, functionality, and the behaviour of users for the better. Tim Spann of Keller Kitchens explains how architects can harness colours to create spaces that inspire, energise, or calm.

In the ever-evolving kitchen sector, trends shape designs and challenge us to rethink the familiar. We follow them, create them, or sometimes disregard them, but they're always a reflection of the world around us. For example, in the current cost-of-living crisis and economic turbulence, many are turning to brighter, uplifting colours to boost their spirits. This trend taps into the psychology of colour, where our kitchens act as canvasses to express emotions and project the 'vibes' we want.

Nature's colour palettes remain an enduring inspiration. Today, we are drawn to earthy hues – gentle greens, serene blues, and soft neutrals – creating an atmosphere of peace and tranquillity. These shades, rooted in the landscapes around us, foster a connection to nature. The result? A design that's minimal yet abundant, with sustainable touches like natural woods, 'greige,' cream, and pastel tones. These colours soothe the soul, create harmony, and evoke comfort.

On the other hand, the bold trend of "Cluttercore" embraces maximalism, extravagance, and imperfection. This aesthetic celebrates individuality, encouraging creativity and adding intrigue to the heart of the home. It's about embracing the unique quirks of spaces and lives, creating an eclectic mix that's vibrant and playful, with each design choice telling its own story.

For those seeking something rooted in history, Hellenism offers inspiration. Ancient Greek style brings grandeur and elegance to modern spaces with tactile, vibrant materials – textures that beg to be touched – and colours that shimmer. Whites, golds, silvers, and marble accents convey luxury, while soft, rounded shapes suggest femininity and grace.

For pure energy, consider mixing organic and synthetic materials. This playful fusion adds fun and function to kitchens with dynamic features like bold colours, abstract shapes, pop art symbols, and vibrant stripes. Earthy tones like bronze, ochre, and deep blues bring grounded energy while injecting a sense of freedom and joy. This trend emphasises mixing and matching, turning chaos into creativity.

Colours in the kitchen do more than set the mood; they can influence how we feel and even impact our appetite. It's not just about personal preference; it's about understanding the psychology behind each colour choice. When selecting kitchen colours, it's essential to consider the energy and mood that the homeowner wants to cultivate in the space.

Let's explore the psychology of some key colours and how they affect the kitchen's atmosphere. Red is a powerhouse of energy; known to stimulate appetite, it's why many restaurants use red in their decor. It evokes passion and excitement, but can feel overwhelming if overused. Balance it

Colours in the kitchen do more than set the mood; they can influence how we feel and even impact our appetite

with other colours to keep the energy high without making the space too intense.

Yellow uplifts spirits and is a perfect choice for a lively kitchen where cooking and eating are a joyful experience. Yellow can energise the room, so use it in accents or feature walls to bring a sunny vibe.

Calming blue helps create a sense of space and confidence. While it is perfect for creating an easy-going atmosphere, too much can make the space feel too laid-back or sleepy. Keep it in balance for an active yet relaxing environment. Green is calming, promoting relaxation and balance; it's believed to aid digestion, making it a great choice for kitchens, and makes a space feel fresh and vibrant.

As open-plan living and the 'omni-design' trend (of creating a unified feel across different spaces) continue to gain popularity, the kitchen's colour choices now play an increasingly significant role in shaping the entire home's vibe. The kitchen's palette is more interconnected with the rest of the interior design. Designers should therefore embrace the freedom to mix and match colours and explore bold combinations to bring energy into domestic spaces.

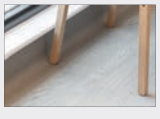
One crucial and constant factor governing how colours will appear however is lighting – whether natural or artificial. Lighting quality affects how colours are perceived, as different materials and colours interact with light in unique ways. The same colour can look completely different depending on the time of day or the light source. Therefore, good lighting is key to bringing out the best in your colour choices.

For kitchens with limited natural light, bold colours can breathe life into the space, making it feel vibrant even in darker areas. However, neutral colours are timeless and versatile. They create a solid base that complements almost any other hue, making them ideal for kitchens where flexibility in design is key.

If the homeowner prefers a more neutral base, personality can be added with colour pops. Accessories such as vibrant dishware, funky textiles, or statement light fixtures allow you to inject character without overwhelming the space. Alternatively, a feature wall or splash-back in a bold colour can create a striking focal point.

Tim Spann is national sales manager UK for Keller Kitchens

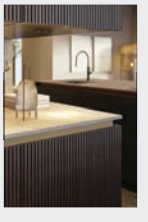
Altro features in dementia-friendly design



Altro products has been used at Salisbury District Hospital. A combination of Altro floors and walls was used throughout Imber Ward. Altro Illustra, Altro Suprema and Altro Operetta floors provide safety, natural aesthetics and ease of cleaning. Altro Wood provides a homely, welcoming feel and Altro Whiterock Digiclad (Custom) was used for the walls creating an individual design focus for the ward and quiet room. Altro Pisces and Altro Whiterock Satins and Altro Whiterock White were installed in the bathrooms, showers and wet rooms, giving staff and patients the reassurance of bare foot and shod safety from slips, and easy to clean hygienic walls.

enquiries@altro.com www.altro.com/uk/sectors/health-and-care

Kitchen showcases trendy ribbed look



With **Keller**, trends are introduced before they become widespread; the company has always been a design pioneer. The new Modern Urban scheme is perfect for contemporary kitchen interiors where design and affordability go hand in hand. Today's fashion encompasses lines, ribs, the travertine-look and a penchant for the modular. This new kitchen, answering modern tastes, is ideal for new builds and refits alike; it's compact, modern, and stylish while space optimisation is simple. The Everest model here, in melamine, beautifully illustrates the new Peat ribbed-effect finish.

www.kellerkitchens.com

STUDENT ACCOMMODATION
FIRE SAFETY
HOYLES
HobWatcher
HobWatcher ensures hobs will only operate for a pre-set time if left unattended.
• Automatic Hob Isolator
• Prevents hob fires
• LED and audible status alerts
• Directly replaces existing hob isolator switch
DorWatcher
DorWatcher ensures kitchen fire doors are kept closed when not in use.
• Reduces fire alarm activations
• Robust and tamper resistant
• Battery or mains powered
DorWatcher Alarm
UK Manufacturers of high quality, unique, control and security systems supplied worldwide.
Tel: +44 (0)1744 886600
sales@hoyles.com
www.hoyles.com

Charlton & Jenrick 7 YEAR WARRANTY

Plug and play secondary heating solutions.

Introducing our iRange fires.

Charlton & Jenrick LTD

Scan, click or call to find out more

marketing@charltonandjenrick.co.uk

charltonandjenrick.co.uk

01952 200 444

The Original since 1975

Schlüter®-SCHIENE

For 50 years, tilers have relied on Schlüter-SCHIENE to reliably protect the results of their work.

Developed from practical experience by master tiler Werner Schlüter in 1975, our best-known product still offers perfect edge protection today.

From these humble beginnings comes a world of expert protection, knowledge and solutions for tile, stone and many other floor coverings. **schluter.co.uk/schiene**

Schlüter® Systems

The design evolution of shower toilets

Shower toilet technology is evolving – helping reshape bathroom design, as architects embrace these multifunctional solutions. Sophie Weston of Geberit shows how they blend luxury with space efficiency and sustainability in a variety of settings.

Achieving the balance between space and style remains one of the biggest challenges for architects when designing bathrooms. Homes are generally getting smaller (down 20% in the last 40 years), as are bathrooms in commercial spaces such as hotels. Despite this, demand for design-led spaces is growing, particularly in the bathroom, which is increasingly seen as one of the most important places to switch off from our 'always-on' world.

Homeowners want sanctuary, inspired by the spa-like hotel bathroom spaces they see around the world. And hotels want to lead the market in delivering spaces built for wellbeing. Achieving this in bathrooms, where space optimisation is crucial, is no easy task for architects and designers.

The role of shower toilets

One of the most effective ways to optimise space through design is through the development of multifunctional, technology-enabled bathrooms.

Shower toilets are the forefront of this shift, with the latest models offering smart technology, personalised comfort settings and sleek designs that contribute to a spa-like bathroom experience. They are proving increasingly popular in high-end residential and commercial projects, made possible thanks to a significant development in design and perception of these smart bathroom appliances.

To set the context, it is important to understand the products' functionality. Setting new standards in the bathroom, modern shower toilets combine a modern toilet with spray functionality at the touch of a button for gentle, hygienic and thorough cleaning of sensitive, intimate areas. For many years in the UK, they were considered (and often looked like) institutional bidets, reserved for care sectors in particular. Now, like many other countries around the world, perceptions are changing. The latest designs offer an aspirational product that adds to any design-led project, in both domestic and commercial settings.

From a practical, space-optimising point of view, shower toilets combine the functionality of two appliances (toilet and separate bidet), which is obviously one of the most effective ways to save space. In reality, modern solutions can solve multiple design challenges simultaneously.

Aside from the footprint in smaller bathroom spaces, some shower toilets include a concealed cistern and supply connection, as well as wall-hung design. These features are all recognised as tools to make a bathroom space feel bigger,

Homeowners want places of sanctuary, inspired by spa-like hotel bathroom spaces that they see around the world

The all-in-one, fit-in-a-day shower cubicle – job done!

Shower included, all round glass panels and easy installation – the Kinemagic Design is in a class of its own

With a low height tray, thermostatic valve and range of sizes the Kinemagic Design will fit in most bathrooms. It can be installed in just one day with no mess or fuss and no re-tiling. Making our Kinemagic range one of most stylish, practical, versatile and most popular range of showers.

Visit a Kinedo showroom or see our website to find out more.

kinedo.co.uk

Kinedo | SFA GROUP

particularly in compact spaces.

They are straightforward to install in around one to two hours, subject to any minor adjustments that might be necessary for the water and power supplies, and can offer enhanced hygiene through touchless operation via apps or remote controls. Despite the sophisticated functionality, they are incredibly easy to use, and very easy to clean and maintain too.

Some solutions offer an ergonomic, rimless ceramic design that ensures optimum cleaning of the pan, easy cleaning and uncompromising hygiene for the user. They also include heated water for a comfortable cleansing experience and an automatic descaling programme for hassle-free maintenance.

Sustainable solutions

In addition, shower toilets tick the box for sustainability in more ways than one – an increasingly important feature for any solution, particularly when considering BREEAM and other green project goals.

Cleaning with water is not just hygienic and more gentle than cleaning with toilet paper, but it also eradicates toilet paper use, as well as reducing water use. The average household uses around 27.5 kg of toilet paper per year and opting for a shower toilet will reduce the amount of wood used for toilet paper by 61 kg per year. In addition, the production of toilet paper requires 2,350 litres of water per year for one household. In contrast, some offer spray functionality which consumes only 1,500 litres of water, saving 850 litres each year.

These shower toilets perform well in the life cycle assessment, with studies showing that the additional water consumption for the shower function is hardly worth noting in comparison to the impact of toilet paper production and the electricity consumption for heating water.

Overcoming challenges

With all of these key drivers in mind, as perceptions continue to evolve, shower toilets are set to become a staple of modern bathroom design. The last remaining challenge is to overcome inertia and outdated thinking and embrace a design-led, feature-enhancing solution for any high end project.

Sophie Weston is head of marketing at Geberit

Harmonious colour in the bathroom with KEUCO EDITION 11 ART

KEUCO has launched their new EDITION 11 ART series with its tone-on-tone colour concept that creates stunning bathroom furniture: delicate in design yet solid in structure. Colour options are bold and distinctive all the products are available in White, Sand, Manhattan, Blue Satin, and Smoke, ensuring consistency across all surfaces, and materials.

The focus is placed on the centrepiece of every bathroom, the washbasin and vanity, the delicate and exceptionally thin edges of the washbasin visually blend into the vanity to make it look as if it is a single unit. This is available as a single or double washbasin solution, in two widths and a choice of one or two drawers. The interior of the EDITION 11 ART drawers are completed in elegant carbon black, and additional carbon black storage boxes blend in seamlessly, while veneer versions echo the look of the veneered body. These storage solutions can be used for both vanity units and side units.

Additional storage options, include tall units, with transparent glass shelving and long mirrors which discretely disguise two handy shelves. An illuminated circular mirror can be placed above the vanity, or if additional storage is needed the SOMARIS mirror cabinet, is ideal as the side panels of the SOMARIS cabinets are available in the x216 RAL Classic colours and can be matched to the EDITION 11 ART furniture.

The colour concept of EDITION 11 ART continues as the furniture's side handle is available in the same finishes as other KEUCO fittings and accessories: brushed red gold, brushed brass, brushed titanium black, aluminium finish, and stainless-steel finish, as well as deep black matt or chrome.

01442 865 220 www.keuco.com

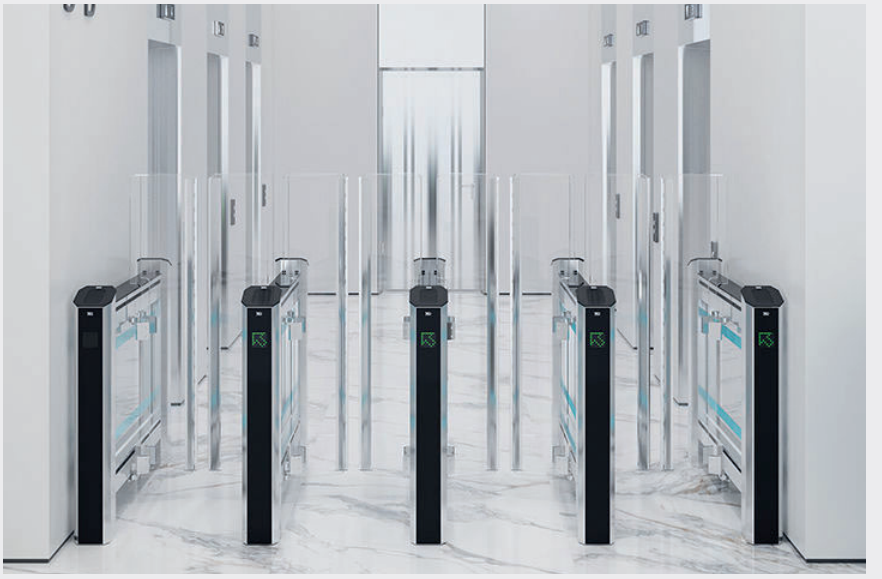
The role of Access Control Systems in Enhancing Building Safety

SCAN ME

In today's environment, ensuring building safety has become a top priority for businesses. Access control systems – including speed gates, turnstiles, and revolving security doors - are instrumental in enhancing the safety and security of modern structures such as office buildings, airports, data centers, stadiums, and gyms.

When reviewing manufactures of these systems, its imperative to ensure they are adhering to the EN 17352:2022 standard, which specifies the requirements and test methods for power operated pedestrian entrance control equipment and the level of safety to be expected.

Let's now explore how access control systems can play a crucial role in building safety:



Preventing Unauthorised Access

The primary function of access control systems is to prevent unauthorised access to restricted areas within a building. Speed gates, turnstiles, and revolving security doors work by allowing only individuals with valid credentials – such as access cards, biometric scans, or keypads – to enter. This prevents unauthorised persons from entering sensitive or secure areas, such as offices, server rooms, or executive floors. Speed gates, in particular, are widely used in high-traffic areas, offering both speed and security by allowing authorised individuals to pass and stopping anyone unauthorised. Turnstiles provide a more robust physical barrier, ensuring that people can only enter one at a time, reducing the risk of tailgating or unauthorised group entry.

Mitigating Security Threats

Access control systems help mitigate a wide range of security threats, such as theft, espionage, or vandalism, by restricting access to sensitive areas. In a corporate building, this could mean protecting proprietary data in a server room or safeguarding valuable physical assets. By controlling who enters and exits a building, access control systems also reduce the potential for workplace violence and other physical threats.

Monitoring and Audit Trails

Another significant advantage is the ability to create detailed audit trails. Every time someone enters or exits a building, the system records the event. This data can be reviewed later, providing valuable insights into who accessed particular areas and when. For organisations, this means they can monitor employee movement, track incidents, and ensure compliance with security protocols.

Enhancing User Experience and Operational Efficiency

Access control systems not only improve security but also enhance users experience. By allowing seamless, frictionless access to authorised individuals, these systems reduce the need for manual checks or queues. This is especially valuable in high-traffic areas where efficiency is key.

Cost Savings in the Long Run

While the initial cost of installing an access control system might seem significant, the long-term benefits outweigh the investment. By reducing the risk of theft, vandalism, and unauthorised access, building owners and managers can save money on repairs, replacements, labour costs and insurance premiums.

GEZE Solution: PACE (Pedestrian Access Control Equipment) – Using TiSO product technology

These systems are designed to manage and control access for individuals, commonly used in locations such as data centers, airports, train stations, stadiums, and other public spaces or areas with heightened security needs. You can choose from various options, including speed gates, turnstiles, or revolving security doors. We offer the ideal solution for a wide range of requirements. All products are manufactured in strict compliance with international standards and meet all modern, quality, safety, design and usability requirements, such as EN 17352:2022.

GEZE

info.uk@geze.com www.geze.co.uk/en

Unlocking SuDS benefits

With plans for 1.5 million new homes requiring swathes of land across the country including flood plains, Richard Eddy of Polypipe Building Products discusses how SuDS could be the key for architects, as the sector enters unchartered territory.

Ambitious targets are only ever achieved by taking ambitious actions. So, it is perhaps unsurprising that the UK Government's aim to build 1.5 million new homes has come with a bold strategy attached.

With large swathes of British land governed by strict green belt restrictions, developers have – for many years – largely relied on building upwards or bulldozed brownfield sites. The trend of more tall buildings will continue, but with so many more homes required, the government has attempted to accelerate housebuilding by changing the rules around where construction can commence, particularly outside of our city centres.

The proposed introduction of 'brownfield passports' to build on previously developed land that has fallen into disrepair is one tactic. But another is opening up small parcels of lower-quality green belt land, which is being redesignated as 'grey belt' – and deemed suitable for construction.

Building on neglected or entirely new land comes with challenges – not least in making the area safe from increasing threats of water damage. 'Think tank' Localis has reported that over 7,000 homes are being planned for sites in flood plains, meaning architects must be putting effective flood planning at the forefront of their blueprints to ensure safe building.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) will play a key role in the push to 'Get Britain Building Again' as the construction sector navigates unfamiliar territory which may come with a heightened risk of flood issues.

The vital role of SuDS

More than 4.6 million UK properties are already at risk from surface water flooding, and with 1.5 million new homes planned for the next five years on new, untested land, there is high urgency for specification of flood systems to be integrated into the planning process.

The added complication is the call to make housing more resilient, as weather conditions are worsening. In 2024, Britain recorded its wettest winter period for 130 years, and a study found that rainfall in the winter season of 2023/24 was 20% more intense due to climate change.

A move towards higher quality drainage methods is clearly necessary, but this is only part of the solution. Specified systems must also be more sustainable – and ensure they do not perpetuate further damage to the environment that can come as a result of intensive building work.

This is why the role of SuDS is so vital. SuDS installations offer an alternative to traditional drainage systems by managing surface water and flood risks in a way that aligns with natural water processes. By mimicking nature, SuDS help to store rainwater, allowing it to infiltrate the ground or release slowly over time. This replicates greenfield natural drainage and reduces the likelihood of flooding whilst improving water quality. It could be the answer that architects will need, as they take safety considerations on board for new developments.

How can architects adopt SuDS?

The mandatory use of SuDS in all new construction projects for developments which are over 100 m^2 is still awaiting clearance, despite lengthy previous discussions at top levels. This situation has created a degree of 'fuzziness' around the importance of the method and its implementation; but including it in plans now means a chance to avoid further inevitable red tape later down the line.

The effective adoption of SuDS involves implementation at an early design stage – with each drainage system tailored

A move towards higher quality drainage methods is clearly necessary, but is only part of the solution

The widespread adoption of SuDS is going to play a key role as the UK continues to work towards achieving its 300,000+ homes per year target on new land

specifically to the site's unique properties and characteristics.

For example, brownfield land, which may harbour pre-existing properties that can be retrofitted, will require a different approach to installing on former green belt land which has previously been left untouched by the construction world until now.

There is a need to examine the ways that systems can match the natural water cycle of a particular area, and for an approach that not only enhances environmental sustainability in drainage but also offers long-term safety and cost savings.

The future of SuDS in development

SuDS can take the form of raingardens, green roofs and permeable surfacing – all of which have the ability to collect excess water from rainfall and decrease the pressure on the wider system to prevent flooding.

The transition towards sustainable drainage is not merely a regulatory obligation but a strategic opportunity for architects and the housebuilding industry. SuDS are a core element of sustainable planning and development given their ability to transform urban landscapes into resilient, sustainable and attractive living spaces.

By incorporating permeable surfaces, natural water management, rainwater harvesting, green infrastructure, and smart drainage techniques with the right building products, architects can create resilient, water-efficient, and environmentally friendly spaces. Embracing these solutions is essential for futureproofing communities and fostering a more sustainable built environment which is in the midst of rapid growth.

The widespread adoption of SuDS is going to play a key role as the UK continues to work towards achieving its 300,000+ homes per year target on new land. These systems are representative of the sort of technology that architects must embrace as planning and development transforms and accelerates, over the course of 2025 and beyond.

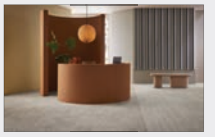
Richard Eddy is category manager of underground & utilities at Polypipe Building Products

Slimline internal fire door by Schüco Jansen

Schüco Jansen has introduced a new internal fire door with the slimmest sightlines available on the UK market for an internal fire rated system. The Jansen Art'15 Fire NR E-EW fire protection door system is designed for safety with no compromise on style. The new system is an evolution of the popular non-insulated Jansen Art'15 steel door and partition wall system and, like the original, features an extremely slimline, attractive profile. The latest Jansen Art'15 system also brings an impressive level of fire resistance.

01908 282 111 schueco.com/uk/specifiers/magazine/art15-fire

Forbo refreshes its Eternal vinyl range



Forbo Flooring Systems has renewed its Eternal collection of general purpose vinyl, with a focus on expertise in design, performance and sustainability – with increased recycled content, lower embodied carbon and an adhesive free range now available. Offering new contemporary wood and stone patterns and a matte-satin finish for a more natural and realistic appearance, Eternal allows architects and specifiers to create beautiful flooring schemes across a range of spaces. Forbo's Eternal vinyl flooring has been a trusted solution on the market for over 20 years.

forbo-flooring.co.uk forbo-flooring.co.uk/fastflooringcalculator

AdvancedLive provides modern protection for historic Blists Hill Victorian Town

Blists Hill Victorian Town museum in the Ironbridge Gorge now benefits from a comprehensive **Advanced** fire protection system designed to improve safety, simplify management, and provide real-time insights across its expansive historical site. Preserving this historical charm required a modern fire safety solution that could operate across the sprawling, complex site – encompassing mine tunnels and standalone structures – without disrupting daily operations or its unique visitor experience. The site now features seven separate Advanced MxPro 5 panels which are connected to the AdvancedLive smart monitoring and management platform. This allows the independent panels to be unified into a single, cohesive interface, creating a virtual network for the fire system. This approach eliminates the need for additional hardware like separate BMS interfaces or modules, making the solution cost effective and simple to install. By making the fire system status available anytime, anywhere via any internet-enabled device, AdvancedLive provides the site's security and facilities teams with seamless, centralised management to suit their location and schedule.

0345 894 7000 www.advancedco.com

BUILDING INSIGHTS

A PODCAST FOR THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

LISTEN AT INSIGHTS.NETMAGMEDIA.CO.UK/PODCASTS

IMAGINE FACADES
BEYOND LIMITS

The TENTAL facade gives you the freedom to unleash your creativity while significantly reducing environmental impact. Thanks to its recycled aluminium and extremely low thermal transmission, it offers you one of the industry's lowest carbon footprints for your next project.

So not only can you imagine the world you want, you can build it too.

IMAGINE WHAT'S NEXT

Hydro CIRCAL® Recycled Aluminium

CERTIFIED cradle to cradle PRODUCTS PROGRAM

TECHNAL®

By Hydro

↗ **Windows** ↗ **Doors** ↗ **Facades** www.technal.co.uk